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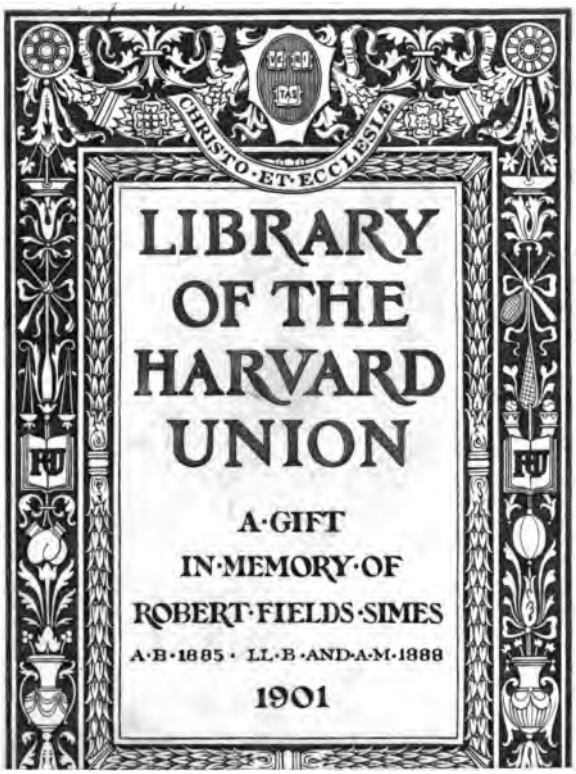

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LETTERS FROM SAMOA

MRS. M. I. STEVENSON IN 1848

LETTERS

BY

MRS M. L. STEVENSON

EDITED BY

MARIE CLOSE STEVENSON

WITH TWELVE ILLUSTRATIONS

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
153-157 FIFTH AVENUE
1906

LETTERS FROM SAMOA

1891-1895

BY

MRS. M. I. STEVENSON

EDITED AND ARRANGED BY

MARIE CLOTHILDE BALFOUR

EDITOR OF

'FROM SARANAC TO THE MARQUESAS'

8087

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First Published in 1906

TO

FANNY VAN DE GRIFT STEVENSON

IN LOVING MEMORY OF ALL SHE WAS

ALIKE TO R. L. S. AND TO HIS MOTHER

THESE LETTERS ARE DEDICATED

BY THEIR RECIPIENT

JANE WHYTE BALFOUR

803.

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PREFACE

THIS is the second, and last, instalment of Mrs. Stevenson's Letters, written during her journeys to Samoa and her life there in the household of her son, up to her return home after his death.

To Stevenson lovers there may be some interest in his mother's account of the last happy days they spent together on earth. At the same time it may be frankly confessed that these letters are published, far less with a desire to furnish a few more details of a life about which so much has already been written, than to preserve some memorial of one as well beloved, if less widely known. In her own circle Mrs. Stevenson was not in any sense only 'the mother of R. L. S.,' and it may be said, without injustice to her brilliant son, that amongst those who knew and loved them both she held no secondary place. Personal charm and wit, a bright responsive spirit, extraordinary quickness of sympathy and understanding, and a sterling

common-sense, were qualities as fully shared by mother and son as were their patience and bravery in suffering and sorrow, and their amazing cheerfulness of heart. She, like him, lived to the tune of that most characteristic of his prayers—

> 'Give us to awake with smiles;
> Give us to labour smiling.'

Nor is it by chance that in these letters R. L. S. appears only as the beloved son. With instinctive tact his mother avoided that public life which she felt was not wholly hers to deal with, and to which others had a directer claim than she. To those others she was content to leave the novelist and writer, for all her pride and joy in his success; and to keep for herself, and for those who would read her letters, the memory of the little son, the delicate, greatly beloved child of so many anxious bygone years. That, at least, was her own, and remained with her to the end; for if there were a 'dear resting-place' to be left behind on Vaea Mountain, there was no less dear a memory still waiting to meet her in the grey and wind-swept Edinburgh streets, which were her home, and his.

M. C. B.

LETTERS FROM SAMOA

S.S. 'Lusitania,' December 6, 1890.

MY dear . . .—Here we[1] are safely settled on board, very comfortable on the whole; and as many of the passengers leave us by the way, we shall have plenty of room by and by. Several friends came to see us off, but we felt rather sorry for them. Lloyd had promised them a bottle of champagne, but it turned out that all the wine was in bond, and could not be used till we had fairly set sail; so we had only cold comfort to give them, and they were soon ordered off to the tender that had brought us out a very short time earlier. Our start from —— Avenue was rather diverting; the cab arrived much earlier than we expected, and we hurried away in, as it proved, a quite unnecessary hurry. I started with my boots unbuttoned, and had to have them fastened for me under difficulties in the cab, while C—— was busy in the other corner sewing up some holes in K——'s gloves. I suggested that we might send a sketch

[1] Mrs. Stevenson was accompanied, not only by Lloyd Osbourne, the stepson of R. L. S., but by a nephew of her own, who went with her as far as Australia.

of it to *Punch*, labelling it 'Emigrants starting for Australia.'

After getting on board we had an unpleasant fright, as my cabin-box could not be found anywhere. When I tell you that it contained all the money belonging to the whole party, except some odd shillings, and also my letter of credit, you can imagine we were rather seriously disturbed. We knew, indeed, that it had come on board, as Lloyd had himself brought the luggage down by an earlier train than ours, and could answer for its safety so far; but we were very thankful when, late at night, it turned up somewhere in the steerage, and we could go to sleep with easy minds.

The cold on board is something dreadful; I have never ventured on deck since the tender left. The cabin is heated with hot-water pipes, but as the windows are open all the afternoon, it is impossible to sit there; so yesterday I retired ignominiously to bed, as the only place where I could keep myself warm. . . . I hear the letters are to go off at once, so there is no time for more. Good-bye to you and to all the dear ones; God bless you all, and watch between us *when we are absent the one from the other*. . . .

Sunday, December 7, 1890.

WE are in the Bay of Biscay; but on the whole it is dealing mercifully with us, and in spite of a heavy swell that makes walking

difficult the day has been pleasant, and warmer than we have had yet, though with never a glimpse of sun. A good many passengers came on board at Plymouth, amongst others the clergyman who conducted the service to-day, and did it very nicely, not rattling it over in the way I so much dislike. I have no doubt I shall hear his name soon, but the passenger-list is not out yet, and we do not know much of our companions. The party at our table, the purser's, promises, however, to be a very friendly and cheery one, and we think ourselves fortunate to have such pleasant neighbours. When it is possible to be more on deck, we shall have more opportunity to be sociable.

December 8.

THE clergyman's name is Canon ——, going out to Naples for his health. He is very pleasant, but very High Church, and told me that 'the Reformation took away from the people the Mass that they *did* understand, and gave them the Prayer Book which they did *not*.' . . . He is a great admirer of Browning, and when he discovered my delinquencies in that respect he offered, as you will be amused to hear, to carry on my education in his poems, which J—— began. See what a thorn in the flesh I must be to his admirers!

We are through 'the Bay' now, and safely

past the scene of the *Serpent* disaster, as I confess I was relieved to be told. The Spanish coast has been in sight all morning, and the day is fairly mild; but the sun has never yet put in an appearance since we left home, and I do weary to see his face once more—what a difference it makes, both sky and sea are so hopelessly grey and gloomy without him.

December 9.

A LOVELY day at last, bright sunshine and delicious air, and we begin to feel that we have left winter behind. I have been long on deck, looking at Cape St. Vincent; it is a cruelly bleak spot, high and bare of all vegetation; a terrible spot, surely, for any ship to run ashore. What must it have been in the days when lighthouses were not.

Letters have to be posted to-night for the Gibraltar mail to-morrow, as we get in very early, and shall not have more than two hours or so on shore. Consequently I am closing this at once; there is no news in it, but it will tell you we are well, and later on I hope to have more interesting things to chronicle. . . .

Near Algiers, December 11, 1890.

NOW we are fairly into sunshine and azure seas, but the wind is still very cold indeed in the mornings and evenings.

Yesterday we reached Gibraltar about 7 A.M. The bay, of course, is beautiful, with mountains all round, and the famous Rock, with the town climbing up its sides, in the forefront. Algeciras, where the bull-fights take place, lay white and lovely in the sunshine on the other side of the bay. As soon as we had had an early breakfast we went on shore for two hours; the Canon went with us, and a young lady who is going out all alone to Sydney to be married; so we were quite a little party. The drive through the town was curious; the narrow streets were filled with so many strange-looking people, women with black lace over their heads (but I saw not a single pretty one!), wonderful donkeys laden with more wonderful loads of fruit, vegetables, coals, all sorts of things; droves of turkeys driven by two men with sticks, as we see cows driven at home—so many unfamiliar sights combined with so much that was quite homelike. The soldiers wore such well-known uniforms; shops marked their wares with English values, and were full of English advertisements; the streets were named 'King Street,' 'Parliament Lane,' etc., and the effect was strange and bewildering, at least to me.

We drove through the great fortifications, which I am quite incapable of describing even in the most summary fashion; past the neutral ground, and looked across it into Spain. And, of course, we visited the 'galleries,' those

wonderful tunnels cut and blasted in the heart of the rock itself. I rather felt, in the darker parts, as if we were back in the catacombs at Rome, but every here and there we came to an embrasure, with a gun looking out over the bay, and a lovely view of the sunlit waters far below. The galleries that we were allowed to visit were finished quite a hundred years ago, all the work being done by English convicts brought here for the purpose; but I believe there are many newer ones that the public may not enter.

There were a good many feeble puns, as you can imagine, anent the 'Canon' accompanying us to such a place, but he enjoyed them as much as any one else. In the afternoon he took me in hand and gave me a lesson in Browning; he read to me 'Hervé Riel,' 'The Angel and the Boy,' 'Donald,' and 'One Word More'; and I actually enjoyed them, with the help of a little commentary here and there. So I suppose I must now cease to declare that I do not know the Browning language.

December 13.

ALGIERS was reached, and we 'landed in Africa' yesterday. I was on the whole rather disappointed with the place, as its situation seemed to me far less beautiful than Mentone; it reminded me more of Nice—the new part, close to the sea. But the crowds in the streets were

delightfully picturesque. Old men with white flowing garments and red fez or turban on their heads; veiled women—a most hideous and corpselike spectacle they are! people sitting with crossed legs on mats in the streets and at the doors of small mysteriously dark shops; carts drawn by bullocks, and one that looked as strange as any, harnessed to seven horses in single file! and many other odd and unfamiliar sights. We drove up the steep hill where the new villas are situated, built for the invalids, who come here in crowds; some looked most tempting, with lovely views, and gardens literally ablaze with roses, geraniums, clematis, and great beds of a brilliant cactus that reminded me of 'red-hot pokers.' Then we drove through the Moorish town, and tried to get into a mosque. We traversed the grounds about one, and looked at many of the curiously carved tombstones; and presently we came to a door where we must take off our shoes. I had just unbuttoned my boots, when an old man appeared and told us we could not go in as it was Friday, the Mohammedan Sabbath; and, of course, I only then remembered that I could not fasten my boots again, as I had no buttonhook with me! It was decidedly a sell.

The African coast was in sight nearly all yesterday. The mountains were fine, and I amused myself by picking out several that reminded me of 'friends' at home; there was

a most recognisable Arthur's Seat, and a capital Ben Voirlich. To-day we are coasting Sardinia, and it is most beautiful; but it is so cold that I have never ventured on deck at all. I had another 'lesson in Browning'; this time it was 'A Letter from Carlisle,' which I really liked, and 'By the Fireside.'

We hope to get into Naples to-morrow, and to have news of you all; but I hear we start again early in the morning, so we shall have but a few hours there, and I shall not attempt to answer you till we reach the Canal.

December 16, 1890.

WE did not get in to Naples when we expected, as a very severe storm on Saturday night delayed us so much that we only arrived at 8 P.M. on Sunday, when it was dark, and as cold as charity. Indeed, the whole day had been bitterly cold, and the Apennines were white with snow. I am sure it could have been no worse with you at home. We did not attempt to go ashore; I knew the beauties of Naples twenty-seven years ago, and reconciled myself to seeing no more on this occasion than a row of lights round an ample bay. A good many passengers left us there, the Canon, and several others from our own table, among them. We quite miss them, the Canon especially: he was so genial and pleasant that every one liked him. He has promised me a copy of his *Lenten*

Lectures, preached at St. Paul's, and I am to send him the *News of Female Missionaries* with the account of my Tautira Sunday[1] in it: he declared that he would give me £5 if I would go and tell the story to his Sunday-school children just as I told it to him! So, you see, if all trades fail, I may still turn lecturer.

We got quite an unexpected budget of letters at Naples, and it was a pleasant surprise to hear from Louis. Both Fanny and he had had a touch of fever from clearing jungle. Lou says that he is devoted to the work, so it is a pity that it should upset him. They were having rather a bad time of it in the way of food: one day they dined on a tin of sprats and supped on a breadfruit, and *that* was the gift of charity! It appears that the men-o'-war had all left the bay, and it was consequently no longer worth while to keep food for sale; the butcher had run away, and the Chinaman had given up his garden and gone off too. Louis was just starting to spend Christmas at Auckland, partly to see an oculist about his eyes, and partly to see Tamate (Mr. Chalmers) once more, before he disappears up the Fly river, perhaps to be one of 'the unreturning home.' Lou adds: 'I have a *cultus* for Tamate: he is a man nobody can see and not love. Did I tell you I took the chair at his Missionary Lecture, by his own

[1] See *From Saranac to the Marquesas and Beyond*, p. 193 *et seq.*; Methuen and Co.

request? I thought you would like that, and I was proud to be at his side, even for so long. . . . I suppose he has faults, like the rest of us, but he is as *big as a Church*. I am really highly *mitonaree*[1] now, as becomes your son. . . .'

We left Naples early on Monday morning, and, though cold, the weather had improved and made it possible to go on deck. In the afternoon we got into the Straits of Messina, entering between Scylla and Charybdis; the view on either side, and more especially the colouring of the mountains, was very beautiful. Just about sunset Etna came in sight, against an amber background and a purple sky above, with the crescent moon showing clearly green in the midst of it. The town of Messina lay to the right, and sparkled uncertainly through the twilight; it was really a very wonderful scene, and Etna more than reconciled me to the loss of Vesuvius.

December 17.

WARMER and finer, and it is possible to sit on deck and enjoy it. I am very lazily inclined, I confess, and am busy doing nothing. Lloyd is the only person who does any work on board, so far as I can see; he labours conscientiously over his Samoan books for some hours every forenoon. I meant to have begun my education after leaving Naples,

[1] A Tahitian term, which means anything from Church membership to religion in the abstract.

but was recommended to 'wait till after Ismailia, when we can settle down quietly.'

I am told I must finish this to-night, but I find it impossible to write more with so much talking and music going on about me. . . . I hope this will reach you on Christmas Day, and bring you my loving wishes; you will be all together, and will remember me, I know. I only wish I could look in and join you. Well, at least I will close this with the good old words, A merry Christmas to you, every one, and a very happy New Year!

S.S. 'Lusitania,' in the Red Sea, December 21, 1890.

WE have had a busy and exciting time since I finished my last letter to you. We reached Port Said on Thursday at half-past three, and at once went ashore; where, of course, the first thing we did was to have a donkey-ride. The drivers all speak a little English, of a remarkable kind; and the donkeys have English names—or, at least, so we were told. I had to choose between 'Two lovely black eyes,' 'Mrs. Langtry,' and 'Scots wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled,' but somehow, patriotism notwithstanding, before I knew where I was I found myself galloping (they are splendid fellows to go!) through the streets on the back of 'Two lovely black eyes.' . . . The motion was wonderfully easy, and I quite liked it, and felt that it

was good practice for what lies before me in Samoa! We went to the Arab town, which is so dreadfully dirty that I should not care to venture near it in hot weather. Indeed, we refused to go into an open mosque, much as I had wished to see one; because, for reasons that I won't enlarge upon, we were really afraid to get into close quarters with the Arabs.

Afterwards we went to do some shopping, and the scene in the street was most extraordinary. The whole population seemed to have turned out, and we could scarcely walk along for people pressing their wares upon us; they absolutely fought with each other to get near us. The babel of tongues was deafening, and in itself enough to make buying anything almost impossible; and when a lady with us did buy a hat, we were hemmed in by a crowd of boys with soft baskets, holding them open, and demanding the hat to carry for her. We were obliged to take refuge from our persecutors in a café, but it was not much help; they followed us in, and had to be periodically cleared out by an attendant. Once a Turkish policeman came to the rescue and drove them all out with a stick; he laid on as if he were the clown in a pantomime and with about as much effect. And in the midst of this commotion we were amused to notice how the prices of everything came down if we did not seem to wish to buy; one man, who began by declaring that he would not take less

than 10s. for what appeared to be a silver bracelet, eventually seemed pleased to get 6d.!

We returned on board about six o'clock, but found the coaling still going on: it was rather a curious sight. The coals were brought off in lighters that were lit up by fires blazing in braziers; a couple of planks connected them with the vessel, and the coals were carried in baskets on men's heads. There was a continuous stream of black figures going *up* the one plank with full baskets and *down* the other with empty ones; and against the background of blazing fires the effect was very weird and strange.

About 9 P.M. we started down the Canal, having taken on board the indispensable electric searchlight. It is hired for the purpose, with the electrician in charge, and costs £10, I believe, for the night. The purser took us forward to see it, where it was placed in the bow; it was exceedingly powerful, and lit up both banks of the Canal as if it were day. I wonder how they used to manage without it! As it was, we were stopped twice during the night by vessels in front of us, and did not reach Ismailia till 8 A.M. on Friday. Here we lost many of our fellow-passengers, no less than fifteen from the first saloon alone; so that we are now reduced to a party of thirty. The Canal, as I dare say you know, is very uninteresting, just like a railway cutting with banks of sand on either side, though

here and there one gets a glimpse of rocky hills beyond with strange shades of red upon them. We passed a few house-boats moored to the banks, and I could not help thinking how unutterably dreary it must be to live in them; the few green trees clustered about some of the stations were the only thing that broke the deadly monotony. We were quite glad to be cheered up by a conjurer who came on at Suez: a very excellent one, too, who did his tricks on the open deck and in the middle of us, with no apparatus whatever. Once he unwound a strip of muslin from his turban and handed it to two gentlemen sitting by me; they cut it in two, burned the cut ends with matches, and folded both up together. When the conjurer took an end and shook it, all was whole again, and he tucked it back into his turban as before. . . .

Christmas Day.

THIS has been a strange and rather a sad day to us all, I think. It began in a melancholy way, as one of the sailors died yesterday afternoon and the funeral took place this morning. I thought it was to be very early, but when I went on deck at eight o'clock, I just reached the top of the companion as the body was slid overboard off a plank. It brought my heart to my mouth and sent me below again faster than I had come up. Poor fellow, he

caught cold at Ismailia, and it turned to inflammation of the lungs. He leaves a wife and children, they say; what a loss it will be for them. . . .

At breakfast-time most of us had letters and parcels on our plates, and the saloon was gaily decorated with holly and mistletoe. I was very fortunate, and had more than my share of gifts and cards. Presently we had a good laugh; some one had hung a bunch of mistletoe right over the captain's seat, though he was quite unconscious of it. A Miss ——, a very quiet, nice girl, from whom one would never expect anything 'larky,' went straight up to him and deliberately kissed his bald head. His face was as good as a play, he looked at her with the most comical expression of horror and astonishment, as if he thought she had gone mad,—which he acknowledged he *did*, after his mind had been relieved and his eyes opened by the general shout of laughter about him. After breakfast there was a distribution of presents to all the children in the steerage, with oranges and apples in addition; and some one started races for them, with threepenny-pieces for prizes. But about lunch-time the lovely weather we have had since we left Ismailia broke up and the wind rose suddenly; most of the passengers got ill and disappeared, so that Christmas Day was really the dullest and quietest we have yet spent on board. At dinner we were nearly alone at

table, and in spite of the champagne I insisted on having to drink your health, we were decidedly a quiet, not to say dismal little party. It is at such times that one feels most the distance from home.

December 29.

EARLY this morning we crossed the line, and the weather is now *perfect*. The thermometer in my cabin stands at 82°, and I have the port open day and night, with a wind-sail put in to make a draught; on deck there is always enough of a breeze to prevent the heat from feeling oppressive. I have been beginning Samoan, though as yet with small result; the names of the days of the week seem to be the only words that I can get to stick in my mind! And I have been reading a good deal, too; amongst other books the *Starling*. I don't like the minister in it at all, he is surely a great exaggeration; and even if he were true, I wonder at Norman Macleod sending him forth to the world as a typical Scottish minister. . . . Last night the captain invited us up to his cabin on the bridge and showed us many interesting charts and other things; then he gave us tea and bridecake—he had had about ten lbs. given to him when he was last in Australia!

January 2, 1891.

A HAPPY New Year, and many of them, to you all. We have had quite a merry time since last I wrote; very small dissipations are enjoyable at sea, and break the monotony very pleasantly. One night there was a fancy-dress ball, at which I looked on for a little; the dresses were wonderful, and the effect of the many lights, the draped flags, the moonshine, and the broad light water, was very charming. By day there have been constant cricket-matches, in which I have learnt to be quite interested; and on New Year's Eve we had a concert on deck and a dance, winding up at midnight with 'Auld Lang Syne,' which I sang with all my heart, thinking of so many New Year parties in the old days, and of so many who had sung it then who will sing it no more. . . . After which festivities (and I hope you will not conclude in consequence!) I spent New Year's Day, or the greater part of it, in bed with a sick headache. . . .

January 7.

OUR only fresh event has been the captain's birthday, which we celebrated with right good will. It was quite a dissipated day: the captain invited the ladies to tea in his cabin and gave us most delightful cakes and fruit; *we* invited him to dinner at our table, and drank his

health with all the honours. There was dancing afterwards, and all went off with great spirit; there is something in the sea air, I think, that makes one ready for anything. Not that I mean to suggest that I had any share in the dancing, as that would seem to imply; I do draw the line at that!

We expect to reach Albany some time on Friday, so I am finishing my letter to be ready for the home mail, which is due to leave soon after we get in. . . .

Saturday, January 10.

AND God disposes. Since I last wrote we have been greatly delayed by a storm which lasted two days, and sent all our bad sailors to bed again. We shall not reach Albany till late to-night, and what is worse, we *may* miss the home mail, though I still hope we shall be in time for it. This morning we got our first view of Australia—a low barren coast, with belts of scrub growing amid the sand: not much to look at, I must say, but it is pleasant to see land of any sort after the long voyage—that is now so nearly over. . . .

R.M.S. '*Lusitania*,' *January* 11, 1891.

THE storm on Wednesday and Thursday detained us so long that we had the disappointment of seeing the mail steamer pass us

on her way to England, just before we reached Albany. It was very provoking to miss her by about an hour only, and to know that our letters that we had hurried to finish would now have to wait at least a week.

We sighted the coast of West Australia early yesterday morning—low sandhills topped and belted with a very dark-coloured scrub. Later on there were some fine bold cliffs and rocks, but all looked barren and uninhabited. Under the grey sky, with the very dark—in the distance almost quite black—vegetation, I cannot conceive any coast more bleak and desolate; but I suppose it may look very different in sunshine. It was 9 P.M. before we reached Albany, and we were not tempted to go on shore; the night was pitch-dark and very cold, so Albany remains, for me, a cluster of twinkling lights and the bustle of landing and taking in cargo. We sailed again at 3.45 A.M., and in the morning, when we got up, it was pleasant to find letters and newspapers on the breakfast-table; but you seem to have had a terrible winter at home, what with the Thames frozen over, and the railway strikes in Scotland. I wish I could be sure that you have not suffered in any way. It gives me a very strange sensation to come back again, so suddenly, into the world of daily news and telegraphic despatches; something like stepping out of 'space unattached' straight into the narrow ruts made by the wheels of life.

January 17.

MELBOURNE at last, and we have come to the end of our long voyage in safety. We have taken exactly six weeks from leaving London, and it has been such a pleasant time that we were quite sorry to part with all our friends on board, and fellow-passengers: I wonder in what compartment of our brain we store these flitting friendships, and all the pleasant kindly faces that we may never meet again, at least on earth, or in our waking hours. Sometimes, I am sure, I see them in my dreams. . . .

To arrive at a strange place is always rather bewildering, and it leaves a confusion in one's thoughts behind it. I remember a very kind welcome from M——, a great bustle about luggage—though we had no difficulty with the customs—and the sight of many faces at once strange and familiar. I was disappointed to find no letter from Louis awaiting me, so I have no idea as yet when or where we shall meet. It is true that Belle[1] sent me a good account of them all, and said the latest news from Samoa was satisfactory, but I long for something more definite. Perhaps I shall hear before I write to you again. . . .

Sydney, January 18.

I THINK you will have seen in the *Scotsman* about the broken shaft of the *Lübeck*, which will prepare you for my move to Sydney. I knew

[1] Mrs. Strong, the stepdaughter of R. L. S.

nothing of Louis coming here, so when I read the account in the papers last Tuesday morning, I got such a shock to think of the danger he had been in that I nearly broke down altogether. I am glad to tell you that it really was not so bad as it was made out; the *Lübeck* was never in the hurricane at all, and the broken shaft, which they managed to patch, was her only danger. But it is considered a triumph of engineering skill that under the circumstances she was only four days late of arrival.

As Louis had many things to get and to do, and but little time to spare, it did not seem possible for him to go on to Melbourne, and it was arranged that I should leave by train on Friday to join him here. Everything was settled to this effect, when in the middle of lunch on Thursday a telegram was handed in which impressed me in the brutally abrupt way telegrams affect, that—'Steamer arrangements altered: unless you leave to-day you will not see Louis.' You may fancy what a bombshell this was: I had to rush to my packing, and with M——'s help I just managed to get ready in time. Good-byes were said in a frantic hurry and we started for town. M——'s house is quite a long way out, but we succeeded in reaching the station by 5 P.M. I say 'we,' for M—— and several of her family came to see me off. By the bye, I do not think I have said anything to you about Melbourne, or how it struck me.

Well, I saw very little of it; I had only a week there, and prepared to spend it quietly with M—— rather than wear myself out with sightseeing. There are fine streets and splendid buildings, but I frequently noticed a perfect palace cheek by jowl with a shabby old wooden house, which reminded me of San Francisco, though the roads and pavements in Australia are much better than in any part of the States that I have visited. As to the railway, I had a tolerably comfortable journey to Sydney, but some parts of the line were badly laid and fearfully rough; it was quite ludicrous to see how every one was tossed up and down by the bumping of the carriage. The sleeping-cars are perhaps not quite so well arranged as in America, but there is this great compensation, that ladies have a part reserved to themselves, which is much more comfortable, not to say becoming, as I know to my cost from past experience. Indeed, I find it very interesting to compare the two countries: Australia is so much more like England than America is, that I often find it difficult to realise that I am in a new country and at the other side of the world. Even in its cold winds and changes of temperature Australia thoroughly deserves its name of 'Greater Britain.'

I reached Sydney at noon on Friday, and drove straight to the hotel, where I found my dear boy looking brown and well, but decidedly thinner than when I left him. He says he has

got thinner lately, for want of better food; I think I told you before of their difficulties in that respect. It appears that the change of plan about the steamer was quite as great a surprise here as it was to me; they were all counting on having at least three weeks in which to get together the things required for Vailima, when suddenly it was announced that another steamer was to be put on to replace the *Lübeck*, and that she would sail at 7 A.M. on Saturday. You may imagine the racing and chasing that took place all Thursday and Friday; one of the party kept a cab for thirteen hours on the second day, and took his meals standing. When I arrived there was a great consultation as to whether Louis should return at once to Samoa, or wait here for the next steamer; I threw all my influence into the 'waiting' scale, and succeeded in persuading him to stay. I felt that he would be all the better for a longer rest; and by the time he goes back I hope the new house may be so far advanced as to let him take up his abode in it.

Sydney is a very nice town, thoroughly English in appearance; and this hotel might have come straight from home, it is most comfortable in every way. We are in the best part of the town, close to the Domain (the 'Hyde Park' of Sydney) and the Palace, which is the residence of the Governor, Lord Jersey. The Palace gardens are also open to the public, and include a botanical garden, and I think a zoo-

logical one also; at least to-day I came upon large aviaries full of birds of many kinds, though I was too tired to hunt further for beasts.

This morning I had an interesting surprise. I went with Belle to a Presbyterian church just round the corner; neither of us knew anything about it, but we tried it on our landlord's recommendation. I asked the man who showed us to a seat whether the minister, Dr. Steele, would preach himself; but he said no, it was to be 'the Missionary.' I fancied he meant the assistant, and expected a young man; so I was surprised when I saw an old gentleman with very white hair, and a beard that reminded me of John Knox. He had a strong Scottish accent, and preached a good old-fashioned sermon that went to my heart. It was very short, for he soon diverged into a special appeal, and I discovered that he was Dr. Paton of the New Hebrides, whose book had so greatly interested and delighted me. He gave us some very interesting details of his work and life, and I hope that before I leave Sydney I may both hear and see more of him.

In the afternoon, while walking in the park, I found much preaching going on, nicely varied to suit all tastes. The first man I met was lecturing on Free Thought, and declared that all the old superstitions were dying out; he spent most of his time in praising Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, etc. etc. I did not listen long there. At the next group I found a very vulgar Irish-

man giving an Evangelistic address; the matter was good, but the manner left much to be desired. Further on the Salvation Army people were telling the same tale in (to put it mildly) a much more cheerful way, and, I must say, with less vulgarity. Add to this a number of less noticeable groups all discoursing in their own fashion, and a great many gatherings of children singing hymns—ambulatory Sunday schools, so to speak—and you will concede that a walk through the Domain on a Sunday afternoon is at least not monotonous.

As to-morrow proves to be a public holiday here, I find the home mail closes to-night, and, as usual, I must finish in a hurry. I shall stay here till Louis's departure, then go on to New Zealand, visiting Wellington and Christchurch, and start for Samoa in April; sooner than that Louis insists I must not go, as March is the most trying month in the whole year, especially to newcomers. Some time in April, however, I hope, if all is well, to be '*at home.*'

Sydney, January 31, 1891.

WE have left the hotel, and are very comfortably established in a boarding-house where Belle has already been staying for some time. Our windows look out upon the Domain, and the beautifully wooded park rises just opposite us in a green hill crowned by the Roman Catholic cathedral; the grass is as green as in

England, and there are many of our own 'home' trees, varied by curious-looking pines, a sort of wild fig that is very handsome, but produces no edible fruit, and many others that I do not know. . . . A good many of our fellow-boarders are connected with the stage; they are rather a mixed set, but we only see them at meal-times, as we have a sitting-room to ourselves. One man greatly puzzled me, as I was told he was a 'Professor,' yet his appearance made it difficult to conceive what in the world he could 'profess'; at last I discovered he was the manager of a magic-lantern show! I felt satisfied, as I could believe that his talents might be sufficient for *that* flight. Still, I may be doing him a great injustice, and judging him from rather unfortunate externals, as I believe he frequented a good club in London, and is acquainted with some very eminent men.

Louis thinks this place much quieter than the hotel, and he is certainly less often disturbed by visitors; while, when he wishes to be sociable, he has only to go to the club, where he lunches every day. He is trying hard to get the South Sea letters finished, but confesses that he is not in the least in the mood for writing; it is vexing, and I am sure it keeps him from enjoying the rest and change as he otherwise would. He will start for Samoa on the 19th February, and I for New Zealand about the same time, but the date of the steamer's departure is not out yet.

The accounts of the cold at home are quite alarming, but I see no especial mention of Edinburgh in the papers, so I hope it is keeping up to the character that G—— claims for it as 'the best winter climate in the world'! All the same, I think you could do with a little of the heat that might well be spared here. I like Sydney much; the town is pretty and pleasant, and thoroughly English in its main characteristics; the climate too is generally delightful, by all accounts, save for the hot winds. Last Tuesday we had one of these inflictions, and I have no desire to endure another. The thermometer in my room generally ranges from 76° to 84°, but that day it went up to 94°, and *stayed there*, and the hot air had a peculiarly stifling and breathless effect that was most unpleasant. Strange to say, there are no appliances to keep out the heat here, not even an outside blind as we have at home, or outside shutters as they have in France and Germany. Every one just suffers and grumbles when the hot winds come.

Sunday, February 1.

I WENT to church to-day, hoping to hear Dr. Paton again, but was disappointed to find the service taken by another and far less interesting man, who, moreover, spoke so low and indistinctly that I heard little of what he said. In the afternoon I went into the Park, and listened to the various services going on. Besides those

that I heard last week, I came on a rabid 'total abstinence' man, and a woman lecturing rather frantically on women's rights and wrongs. All these violences are very unsavoury to me; surely it is possible to do what is right, and even to advocate it, without screaming. . . .

We have done very little sight-seeing of any kind; but we had one very pleasant drive to the Heads, or entrance to the harbour, a narrow and dangerous-looking passage between high cliffs. There were lovely views of the harbour all the way; indeed, one never seems to leave its shores for long, as the town overruns many necks and peninsulas of land which are surrounded by the lovely blue waters. We visited a large and important lighthouse at the Heads; it is electric, and though much larger than the one on the May,[1] the apparatus seemed to be very similar in style and arrangement. The keeper who showed us over it said the lights were designed and planned by a young Englishman only twenty-one years of age, but he did not remember his name. I wonder who he could be. . . . It was a delightful drive, though the heat was very great; indeed, it has been very hot ever since I came here. To-day it is a modified hot wind again, and a regular duststorm is blowing outside. I can stand heat, but I don't like the hot winds at all. However, what can one expect in a country where the sun goes round *widdershins*,

[1] Isle of May, in the Forth.

as I discovered it did this morning!! Th
bound to be a few little drawbacks under
topsy-turvy conditions!

Sydney, February 15, 1891.

THE only piece of news that I have time to send you to-day is a vexing one; Louis has been in bed ever since I last wrote, with what seemed at first to be no more than a slight cold, and which we hoped he would throw off. I fancy, however, he got a slight extra chill, for instead of getting better, he was decidedly worse, and we have been very anxious about him. I felt it all the more as, having a slight cold myself, I was excluded for some time from his room to prevent further infection; but he is improving at last, and the doctor still hopes to patch him up sufficiently to get him off in the *Lübeck* on Wednesday evening. I trust he may be able for it, as otherwise poor Fanny will be terribly anxious. I would fain go with him and give up my New Zealand trip, but I hope that the doctor will decide the question this afternoon, so that I shall be able to tell you something more definite before I close this. . . . He has just been to see his patient, and says he is still in a very unsatisfactory state, exceedingly weak and low. Nothing can be settled in the meantime; but unless there is very marked improvement, I don't see how Lou can possibly start for Samoa on Wednesday. If he does go, I think I shall almost cer-

tainly go with him; but you see all my plans are reduced to chaos, and I am only thankful I told you not to write to New Zealand, as I shall probably put off my visits there for the present. I can tell you nothing more just now, and you must wait for the next mail for anything definite: this mere scrap must suffice for to-day. . . .

On board the 'Lübeck,' February 22, 1891.

I FANCY the few lines I wrote last must have prepared you for a gap in my letters; this one will perhaps not reach you for some time, but it can't be helped, and I had no leisure to write again before I started. Louis was so much weakened by his chill that I could not make up my mind to let him go without me. I spoke to the doctor about it, and though he would say nothing definite at first, he told me to be ready to start in case it was necessary. On Tuesday, the day before the steamer sailed, Louis was decidedly better, though still very weak; and the doctor told me that he thought there was now no actual *need* for my going with him, but that he would advise me to do so, for my own sake as well as for Louis's, as he knew I would be anxious about him. I was thankful to hear him say this, as I should certainly have been miserable if left behind, and we were speedily making all the necessary arrangements. I had a very busy time, owing to such a sudden change of plans, and the weather was so oppressively hot that it was

doubly difficult to do anything at all, but somehow we got through. We brought Louis on board straight from his bed on the Wednesday evening at 8 P.M., and I am thankful to say that the change, and the sea-air, have as usual worked wonders. He had a good night, and was actually up to breakfast next morning! Of course he is very well known, and very much at home, on this boat, and I was amused, when I asked the assistant-steward on Thursday morning whether Mr. Stevenson had had his tea, to be answered with an air of dignified reproof, that 'he *always* had it at six o'clock'!

Unfortunately we have had rather bad weather ever since we started: cloudy and sunless, with a very heavy sea that is constantly washing over us and making the decks like a river. Yesterday it was almost impossible to move about; this is bad for Louis and keeps him back, but he is so much better that I do not worry about it. This is a most comfortable little vessel, and in some respects compares very favourably with the larger boats that I have known. The cabins have little wardrobes for hanging clothes in, a convenience I have never seen elsewhere; and in two of them there are also chests of drawers, the top of which is arranged as a writing-table. . . . We have only two fellow-passengers in the first-class: a commercial traveller, who is visiting the islands on business, and a young English girl going to Samoa as a missionary, but who has as yet been

so ill with sea-sickness that I have scarcely seen her. The officers are all German, and very kind and pleasant; but unfortunately most of them speak very little English, which makes *them* slow to speak, and me *very* slow to understand.

Friday, February 27.

WE have lovely weather again, and Louis much better, though still bothered with a painful cough which sometimes distresses him a good deal.

This morning I was up before six to see the entrance to Tonga. We passed through a perfect archipelago of small islands, some of them very like the Paumotus, mere groups of coconut palms apparently growing out of the water; others with little green hills that gave quite a variety to the scenery. Tonga itself has a surprisingly green hill immediately behind the town, with the Wesleyan chapel on the very top of it; the palace of King George and his private chapel are very pretty buildings, and the whole of the little town is admirably clean and bright, with its trim streets and rows of neat little wooden houses. Miss M—— (the young missionary) and I went ashore immediately after breakfast; she was very thirsty and wanted to get some oranges, so we went to several small shops, but to our surprise could find none. At last we noticed a few lying on a window-ledge, and I suggested we might at least inquire there; and

you can imagine our surprise when we found that the little native house was inhabited by an Englishman. He at once begged us to come in and rest, and gave us empty packing-cases to sit upon, while he despatched a native to fetch us a basket of oranges and bananas, and himself regaled us with deliciously cool coconut juice. Finally he constituted himself our guide and took us round the 'town,' showing us all that was to be seen, and calling our attention to a great deal that we should not have noticed or understood without him. He gave us his card, and I found that he was educated in Glasgow and had been in the navy; but exactly what he does at Tonga I could not discover. I shall not soon, however, forget his kindness to two poor 'lone females.'

We were not able, as it happened, to visit the Palace and 'Chapel Royal,' as the king is away in another island, and during his absence the buildings are locked up. There *is* an official in charge, who has the key, but he had 'gone off to the bush,' and retreated from public life with the key still in his pocket, or whatever is the Tongan equivalent. At any rate, as we had but two hours or so on shore, we had no time to send in search of him.

March 4.

I AM back again on the *Lübeck*, after having had my first glimpse of the new home in Samoa.

We sighted Upolu early on Sunday morning;

the scenery is fine, though I could not allow that I thought it as striking as either Tahiti or the Marquesas. The intense *greenness* made me call it the Ireland of the Pacific; but of course this is the midst of the rainy season, and the verdure, always vivid here, is at its brightest. Just before we turned the last point into the bay of Apia, Vailima came into sight high up among the splendid woods; we could even see *both* houses, old and new, to Louis's great delight, as, when he left, the new one was still invisible from the sea. His love for the place was strong in his eyes as he looked at it and pointed it out to me.

Apia itself is very like other little South Sea towns, and not very remarkable. Houses and churches, the German Hospital conspicuous amongst them, are scattered round a very open bay amidst coconut palms, bread-fruits, and bananas; but neither the vegetation nor the immediate surroundings of the town are very noteworthy. One must leave Apia behind before it is possible to see anything of the real loveliness of the island. . . . Lloyd came off to meet us, and was, of course, greatly surprised to see me, especially as Lou is so much better that it must have been difficult to believe he had needed my company. However, we sent off Lŏuis at once on his own horse, while I followed slowly on Lloyd's, with him walking beside me; and so I made my way for the first time on the path that I suppose will soon be so familiar. It

lies in the woods for the whole way, and the rain had made it pretty bad going in places; and under the trees I found the *steaminess* rather trying and oppressive. When we reached Vailima, however, it was all the more delicious to emerge into the ample light and space; the clearing lay open to the sky, with wide and lovely views seaward, and a sweet freshness of air blowing in from the water.

I found Fanny looking wonderfully well, in spite of all the troubles and hard work she has had lately. About a fortnight ago, for instance, they had a regular hurricane, and were obliged to take refuge in the stable, as it was the 'solidest' structure available. Fortunately the horses had not yet taken possession of it, and Fanny, Lloyd, Mr. K——,[1] and Paul the cook had each a stall for a bedroom; but the rain got in very badly, and they could cook no food for several days. Was it not a mercy that Lou was not there at the time? Of course the new house (when it is ready) will be water-tight and (we hope) securely founded; but the little old one is not to be trusted in bad weather. When fine, it is comfortable enough, though so small that no extra person can be squeezed into it. The lower floor is kitchen, harness-room, *and* cook's bed-room; and the upper one is sitting- and bed-room for Louis and Fanny. I had to sleep on the couch, which was covered with mats, and did

[1] The overseer.

very well for a night or so; but when I saw how limited the accommodation was, I quite agreed with Louis that I had better go back with the *Lübeck* to pay my promised visit to New Zealand, and return here when there will really be room for me—not long now, as they are getting on fast. In fact the new house is roofed in, and will be finished in a fortnight or so, though of course everything, both in and out, is very back-woods-y as yet, and it will take quite a long while to put into anything like order. The nearer waterfall was very full and beautiful after the rains, but Fanny has not yet planted her sweet-smelling water-lilies; her gardens, however, are making wonderful progress in so short a time, and she has already onions, turnips, parsley, tomatoes, green peppers, taro, bananas, coffee, the chocolate plant,[1] vanilla, and I can't tell you how many more, growing and thriving splendidly. Asparagus, too, seems to do very well. And you must not think that in *every* sense it is easy to grow things here, or at least, I should say, to get the work done as you want it. To show the constant supervision that is required, I will tell you what happened while she was showing me round. The vanilla plants, which are climbers, are put in at the roots of trees, and a red thread is then tied round each tree, to show that it is *tapu*, and not to be meddled with; but presently we came on a native who had been set to work

[1] More correctly, cacao.

'clearing,' and who had forgotten, or misunderstood, what the red thread meant, and had particularly bent his energies to 'howking' up, not the many worthless plants all about, but as many of the precious vanilla plants as time had permitted! Fortunately, they were not *wholly* destroyed, but Fanny had to replant them again, and hope for the best.

It was too wet underfoot for me to get about much, unfortunately, and on Monday afternoon such a deluge of rain came on, accompanied by thunder and lightning, that I was half afraid I should be storm-stayed at Vailima, while all my possessions went back to Sydney with the steamer. Luckily it cleared for a short time early on Tuesday morning, and soon after 6 A.M. I rode down to Apia, guided by a very pleasant native 'boy' called Lafaële, which is Samoan for Raphael. Lloyd met me, and conveyed me on board the *Lübeck*; he has been living in Apia for a few days, having been pressed into service by the American consul, who in certain cases has to get two American citizens to help or advise with him. I wonder if I told you that, when Lloyd came to Samoa, he had for fellow-travellers the English and German land-commissioners, and they all got on well together, and nicknamed *him* Brother Jonathan. . . .

I left Louis much better, but I am vexed to think that there is still a month of the wet season before him. If only he gets through

that well, he will have nine months of glorious weather to look forward to; and in a climate he enjoys so much, and which suits him so well, that ought to mean a great deal. Of course the small house, in which he lives at present, is most primitive; for instance, the upper floor is reached by two outside stairs, of which the one at the back has a sort of handrail coming about half-way down at one side only, while no kind Providence has provided any protection at all to the stair in front. Belle will occupy this little house when Louis and Fanny move to the new one. . . . The hours kept at Vailima are primitive too; we breakfasted at 6 A.M., lunched at 11, and dined at 5. About 9 P.M. Louis takes a biscuit and a little whisky and water, and then goes off to bed.

As to the natives, they are quite different in colour from the Tahitians, much yellower, more like Egyptians in tint; and they dye their hair a curious red-chestnut, and wear it in light curls close to the head. Many of them are very handsome fellows, and extremely well made; they still tattoo themselves, and wear very little in the way of clothes, generally only a loin-cloth or *pariu*—though that is a Tahitian name for it, and it is called something else here. In the heavy rain and *steam* I rather envied them. I saw no full-blooded native women in the short time I was there, but a few very good-looking half-castes. Louis has a very nice Samoan

working for him just now, called 'Henry'(!); he is really a chief in Savaii, where his father lately died, but when he goes to 'take possession' he must give such great feasts that he has not enough money, and is working for Louis to supply the deficiency. He superintends the black boys who are building the house, and is exceedingly useful and reliable. He has a pleasant face and very good manners; Lou gives him lessons in English, and he says he wishes to learn to be a *real English chief from the heart out*, and he thinks no one else can teach him that so well as Louis. . . .

And now we are well on our way to Sydney, with quite a surprising number, for the *Lübeck*, of first-class passengers. I have got a fearful lot of commissions to do when we arrive for the Vailima people; as Lloyd remarked, 'That will teach you to come to Samoa for a two-days' visit!' The weather is delightful, and once at sea we got quite away from the damp steamy land-heat.

Sydney, March 14.

HERE I am on land once more, after a very unusually fast voyage, a day under the record, I believe. I found many letters awaiting me, and good news of you all; and I was very glad to hear that Professor Swan liked the *Ballads*. I saw in a Samoan paper that all the critics were down upon them, but nothing very bad has reached us yet; only that Lou could

have done them much better in prose, which at all events is a sort of back-handed compliment to the author.

I can't get a steamer to Lyttelton till next Friday; it is provoking to lose ten days when it is already so late in the season, but it can't be helped; and I shall probably give up the trip to the Lakes, and content myself with quietly visiting my old friends near Dunedin.

Melbourne, March 22.

HERE is another surprise for you! Owing to quite a little chapter of—well, let us say, difficulties, I am back once more in Melbourne. The steamer from Sydney put off its sailing *twice over*, which I thought was really too bad; and I found, moreover, that the cabins were all full, and my only chance of comfort (and privacy) would depend on the stewardess's being willing to let me have her own cabin. I went on board to inquire about this, but was so little taken with the boat generally that I gave up all thought of travelling in her, and decided to go *via* Melbourne. I had already been told that this was the best route, but I was anxious to avoid, if possible, the long and lonely land-journey over again. However, I got over it pretty well, though I arrived fairly worn out and fit only to go to bed; and since then I have spent some very pleasant days in the midst of many friends. . . .

March 28.

EN route for New Zealand at last, in a small but very comfortable boat, with the luxury of a little cabin all to myself. The fact is, that it happens to be located just above the screw, and so is not popular; but I am quite willing to put up with that inconvenience in return for the privilege of being alone. This, of course, is merely a postscript to let you know my whereabouts; all yesterday we were sailing through Bass's Straits (between Tasmania and Flinders Island), and to-day we call at Hobart, where I shall post this letter, as it will reach you sooner than if I carry it on to Dunedin. I, alas! cannot hope for more letters from *you* till I get back to Samoa, about the end of May, which at this moment seems a very far-away date indeed; perhaps because I feel just now doubly homesick—for Scotland and for Samoa. My lodestars are far apart, you will say; but then the North and South Poles always have the whole world between them!

Queenstown, New Zealand,
Sunday, April 5.

HERE I am at Queenstown, on Lake Wakatipu, with a very lovely view of the lake from my bedroom window before me as I write. It strikes me as resembling Loch Long —to give you some general idea of it; but there is much less vegetation, and the great mountain-

sides rise sheer out of water so deep that the steamer lies easily against the very shore. But I must at least tell you how I got here.

We reached the Bluff, the first landing-place in New Zealand, on the 1st April, and I could not but think of dear J——'s[1] arrival there twenty-eight long years ago. How I wished he and his were here still. . . . I expected the Bluff to be some sort of a cliff, and cannot remember ever hearing that it was not; but it is nothing of the kind, only a sandy beach, and our captain declared that the only piece of bluff about it is its name! I went on shore, and found a very small town surrounded by low bare hills, on one of which is the signal-post; but though I walked up to it, I was not greatly repaid by the view, and my first impressions of New Zealand were unenthusiastic, which I regretted for dear J——'s sake. Early on Thursday morning, however, we reached Port Chalmers, and in the morning sunlight the town amid its encircling hills was most beautiful. The atmosphere here has a wonderful purity that I noticed at once; it reminds me of Italy.

I did not stay long at Dunedin, though I shall probably return there later. It is a very fine town, much changed and enormously grown since the days when we used to hear so much

[1] Mrs. Stevenson's youngest brother, who was Marine Engineer to the Colony of New Zealand up to his death in 1869, and was greatly esteemed. A glacier in the Alps of the South Island is named after him.

about it; but I dare say in those early gold-digging times it was more interesting and characteristic. Now it is just a 'big toun,' with many handsome streets and buildings and most beautiful surroundings, and a very homelike look that made it hard to remember that I was not still in my 'ain countree.' I visited some of the places we used to know so well by hearsay. The 'Cottage' is away, moved bodily to a site outside the town, and on its garden four new houses are built. And the cemetery, high up on the hillside, is just what I had imagined and wished it to be; beautifully tended, full of sunshine and wind, with a great view over the water; a 'look-out' place. . . .

Yes, it is all very homelike. Even Lake Wakatipu disconcerts me by looking so persistently familiar, and though I know all is on a far grander scale than anything at home, yet when I raise my eyes I look out on a curve of shore and upward sweep of hill that takes me straight back to Scotland and to you. Well, it is good to find something of 'home' so far away!

April 15.

ON the 6th we went by steamer to the head of the lake, starting at six in the morning and reaching Glenorchy about ten. Thence we drove through the bush to Diamond Lake and Paradise; the mountains all had their night-

caps on, for the morning was misty and the air like spun silver. Our driver assured us that the afternoon would be clear; but we were quite content, as we felt nothing could have been more tantalisingly beautiful than the shining shifting veil that floated about us, and I never knew before the countless shades of green and grey that one's eye can perceive and enjoy. We lunched at Paradise, and walked to some of the best 'view-places' to get some idea of the loveliness of mountain and lake; and when we started on the return journey, we found our man had been a true prophet, and that what had been cloudland before was now a wonderful alpine world. There was Earnslaw, magnificent in outline, and the great Cosmos peaks; and the Humboldt range, and a fine glacier. The air was delicious, but decidedly cold; and no wonder, for it came straight to us from ice and snow. You can imagine that we slept well that night, after fourteen hours in that exquisite freshness of atmosphere, crisp and pure as it is only found, I think, in the midst of mountains.

Then we came on here—Fendalton—and it seems to me I have just stepped across the border, with Scotland still in sight. In the garden the chrysanthemums grow in riotous masses of red and white and yellow, and scarlet verbena and mignonette flower all the year round like hardy weeds; there is a pretty little burn that runs close by, and the hedges are all

of whin and still afire with blossom. There are many poplars, their leaves in every shade of autumn beauty, from lemon-yellow to deepest gold; and in the distance rise the snow-clad peaks of a fine range of mountains. I was prepared for the English look of the great Canterbury plains, but to find the mountains here too was a surprise and joy to me.

. . . On Wednesday Mr. S—— took me to the Maori *pah* at Kaiapoi, where he and his wife lived for so long; I saw Maoris practically for the first time, and went to the school to hear the children sing hymns, which they do remarkably well. I cannot but think them inferior to our Samoan Islanders, though I saw many pleasant and intelligent faces among them; but European clothes do vulgarise all these brown people so terribly. It is a pity that the ugliest style of dress in existence seems destined to overrun the world. . . . Also, so far as I can judge from the very little I have seen of them, the Maoris are precisely arrived at the most unbecoming stage of civilisation, and are no longer picturesque; for instance, I saw no tatooing at all, and I believe it is given up. Yet it is not very many years since there was a veritable trade (or so they say) in the heads of dead Maoris, as specimens of what the art of tatooing could achieve!

I feel as if it were my duty to give you something in the way of local information before I

finish this. Well, . . . I saw to-day a New Zealand bird that has no wings, and that hatches her eggs in an incubator of her own ingenious contrivance, covering them over with withered leaves that decay and form a natural hotbed. She does not abrogate her further duties, however, as when the chicks come out she is on the watch, and ready to take charge of them. . . . Perhaps I ought to add that I only made the acquaintance of the *Kiwi* in . . . the museum at Christchurch!

May 3, *on board the* '*Takapuna*.'

I AM now *en route* for Auckland, and I have left not only Feudalton and our kind friends the S——s, but also Wellington, behind me. At the latter place I spent a very pleasant week, and found it all too short; so we planned another visit in the future, when I shall escape the rainy season in Samoa by running over here. . . . To-day our chief enjoyment has been the view of Mount Egmont, which reminds me very strongly of the pictures of Fuji Yama in Japan; it is an almost perfect cone, and entirely covered with snow, new-fallen in the last two days, and radiantly white and pure. In the morning the mountain was veiled with clouds, but they gradually lifted till at last we saw it perfectly clear to the very top, and beautifully outlined against the sky. I watched it till the light died away, and hoped to see the rosy 'afterglow' when the sun

had set; but although the horizon was rosy, the colour did not rise high enough to tint the snow. I think it is the most beautiful mountain—among many—that I have seen in New Zealand.

S.S. 'Wainui,' May 9.

WE are four days out on our way to Samoa, and I feel myself nearing *home* at last: on Friday next I hope to finish my wanderings, and I shall not be sorry to rest and settle down after seven months 'on the move.' How delightful it will be to be with my dear children, and to get news of you all, too, after these last eight weeks or more without either letters or papers!

I was very glad to find I had but a short time to wait at Auckland, as I was wearying to start for Samoa. It was pleasant, too, to discover that I had excellent quarters on a very comfortable boat. I have a nice cabin to myself, and though there are several passengers, there is plenty of room for every one. I like company, but I confess I detest a crowd! Most of the passengers, I find, go off at Tonga; and at present nearly all the ladies are more or less sea-sick, and very rarely put in an appearance at meals. One, a missionary's wife, has been in bed ever since we started, and her youngest child, a mere baby, cries almost all day and night. . . . At night I am the only lady well enough to take a hand at whist, but we generally

have two rubbers, in which the captain always joins us.

Yesterday, the 12th, we reached Tonga, and I enjoyed our time there very much. The weather was perfect, deliciously warm, yet with a fresh breeze and everything on shore looking at its best, and, moreover, as two of the ladies who had come with us in the *Wainui* live at Tonga, they were very kind in showing me all there was to be seen. One of them, Mrs. W——, took me to the king's chapel, which on my last visit I had found locked up; it is quite a pretty building, lined throughout with polished wood, but I was disappointed to learn that all the ornamental parts came from Auckland. I was much more interested in the native church, which is all of home workmanship; the roof, decorated inside with lengths of Tongan wood tied together in patterns with coco-fibre sinnet, is curious, and really effective. The building is a very long oval, and I felt very doubtful whether people sitting at the far end could hear much of the preaching; but when our curiosity led us to experiment, I was surprised to find that every syllable was perfectly and clearly audible. I should not have thought the shape of the church would have been so good acoustically. As we came away, I got a distant view of King George sitting in his garden, an old man with white head and white shirt. I had been rather anxious to visit him,

but now that he is over ninety, he is not very fond of receiving strangers, so I was quite content with this peep.

This morning I went for a drive, to get a general impression of the place. The roads are all covered with grass, and even the wharf is grass-grown; but they are all broad and generally shady. The native houses are oval in shape, and must, I think, be rather dark inside, as I could see no windows, and their walls are not mere lattices, like the Tahitian 'bird-cages.' They stand generally in groups of five or six, scattered about amidst beautiful flowering shrubs, in a sort of compound; horses and pigs were tethered here and there on the grass, and each little colony looked very peaceful and prosperous. Indeed, that is the general impression that one gathers of the green little town; it looks very orderly, very well behaved, and very well-to-do. I cannot tell, however, how far the impression is trustworthy; and I know that Tonga has unfortunately to look on at rather pronounced sectarian differences. Indeed, there has recently been a split in the Methodist Church, with the result that there is now a 'Free Church' community as well; and, as my friends who were so kindly taking me about belonged to the former, I did not like to ask many questions, lest I should find myself in troubled waters. . . . I saw the Roman Catholic cathedral, which is a fine and important building

of white coral, that looks just like marble; and I called at the house of a native minister, where I got two pieces of very fine *tapa*. I also was presented with a bag of lemons and two large yams. I had never seen a yam before, and was amazed to find that they are about three feet long. I am taking them with me to Samoa, and shall tell you later how they impress me from the culinary point of view.

May 15.

WE reached Vavau about midnight on Wednesday, and I went on deck to enjoy the scene. The wharf was crowded with natives chattering and laughing and lighting German matches, which burn with coloured flames and give quite the impression of an illumination in a very small way. Vavau is a beautiful place, a landlocked bay of considerable extent, surrounded by low wooded hills. I went ashore before breakfast and wandered from alley to alley—I cannot call them streets—between orange-trees laden with fruit; the scent was indescribable, and the shade deliciously dense and cool. I brought two great baskets of the fruit on board with me, and how I wished I could have sent them straight to you! After breakfast I went ashore again with the captain, and he took me to the top of a low hill, whence we got a magnificent view of the bay and the country round about; then he introduced me

to two fruits that I had never seen before, the custard-apple and the egg-fruit. The custard-apple looks a good deal like a globe artichoke, and the inside resembles a sort of thick white custard, very sweet; but as it was not yet quite ripe, I did not see it to advantage. The egg-fruit is exactly like a grey egg: it has even got a shell, which breaks easily when it is fully ripe; but, as we could find none ready for eating, I had to be content with a very cursory acquaintance. Perhaps I shall be able to report upon both to you ere long.

We went afterwards to see the 'Royal Palace,' a very nice two-story house, built expressly for 'Prince Wellington,' a grandson of King George and a very promising young man, who was governor of Vavau. Unfortunately he died at the age of twenty-eight, and a monument to his memory, brought all the way from Italy, now stands close to the Palace at Tonga. I believe he was much regretted, and that his death was a real loss for his people.

It was nearly seven P.M. before we bade adieu to the Friendly Islands; a lot of native passengers, bound for Samoa, came on board, and so many of their friends came to see them off, that the chattering and nose-rubbing were quite amusing. Even after we were under weigh they were stretching out from the wharf for a last embrace or handshake, and I fully expected that some of them would tumble into

the water; however, nothing of the sort happened, though I believe it does occur pretty often. Once we were fairly off, the burning of hundreds of red and blue and green matches began again on the wharf, and was replied to from our vessel, and really the sight was exceedingly pretty.

At last I begin to feel myself fairly in the tropics. When I left Auckland, ten days ago, I was wearing winter clothes and found them none too warm; I began to 'shed' them gradually, but only since we got to Tonga has the heat been really tropical. Last night I could not sleep in my cabin, and took refuge on a sofa in the upper saloon or 'Social Hall,' as it is called, so it is all the more welcome to remember that to-morrow morning I hope to get *home* at last!

Vailima, Sunday, May 16.

YES, home at last!! Yesterday at 7 A.M. the *Wainui* cast anchor in the roadstead of Apia; it was a lovely morning, but very hot, decidedly hotter than I had felt it at any of the other islands we touched at. My first welcome was from Mr. M——, who sent his man off at once to see if I wished to come on shore, and to take charge of my luggage; but as I was not quite ready, I told him that I would take breakfast on board, and he might come back for me about nine o'clock. Next came 'Henry,' of

whom I told you before, who acts as a sort of overseer to the black boys; although he is here all day, he sleeps in Apia, and was full of apologies for no one being down to meet me. It seems that the *Wainui* had been expected on Friday afternoon, and Lou and Lloyd had come down to Apia; but when she did not put in an appearance then, it was thought she would not arrive till about the same time next day. However, we got in early, as I have said, and as we came in by the other side of the island to the *Lübeck*, we were not visible from Vailima. Henry added that his horse was in town, and my saddle had been there ever since I left, so I could ride up as soon as I liked. The next person who turned up was the man who has been carting the furniture, and was ready to take up my baggage; he told me that all were well at Vailima, and that they were living in the new house, and that my room was ready for me, 'all but the glass door of the wardrobe,' which sounded very homelike and comfortable.

About nine o'clock I started off, attended by Henry; the horse walked quietly all the way and I arrived safely, and felt very very glad and thankful to be with my beloved children at last. Louis had been for a trip round the island, which had been rather too much for him; he had an attack of fever after he got back, but he seems pretty well again now. He stands a *short* expedition very well, but if he is away

more than a week he gets knocked up, which is a thing to remember and provide against. . . . The house really looks very nice indeed. The outside is painted a sort of peacock blue, and the roof and verandahs a red, that goes very well with it; the dining-room is very pretty and comfortable, the walls hung with *tapa*, the native cloth, which gives an effect of tapestry. There are large sliding-doors, more than half glass, opening on to the verandah, which looks out over the harbour; a smaller glass door opens to the back, and a large double window to the west. The kitchen proper is quite a separate erection at the back, which will eventually be connected with the house by a covered way; but opening from the back verandah is a capital pantry and store-closet, with an American stove in it that can be used for emergencies or special occasions. I think my room is delightful, although in time I am to have even better quarters; it is at present a sitting- and bed-room in one, but the two portions are to be divided by Japanese bead screens, coming from Sydney. I have both sliding-doors and a double window giving on to the verandah that looks towards the sea; and at the 'sitting-room' end the walls are hung with the flags we used on board the *Casco*, the 'red ensign' on the one side, the 'stars and stripes' on the other, and Kalakaua's royal standard in the middle. Above the standard there is a fine

piece of *tapa* from Savage Island, painted with an elaborate pattern and in the centre the word *soifau*, which means *welcome*. The floor is covered with beautiful white Samoan mats, very soft and thick to the tread; the walls and roof are painted pale green, and over my table is hung a lovely branching tree of pink and white coral. What with my books (when I get them out), and the photographs of all your dear faces about me, my room will be at once filled with many memories and associations. . . . The rest of the upper floor is divided into Louis's library and their bedroom. The library is shelved all round and painted green, like my room, but everything in it is as yet in a state of chaos.

The piano is to take up its abode there for the present, until we see our way to building the rest of the house with a large hall, or *lanai*, downstairs, and a couple of rooms for me above. My present apartment will then serve for Lloyd, who now occupies that quaint erection known as the 'bandstand,' though since it has been painted it looks more like a small creeper-clad Swiss chalet. And finally, the little house in which Louis and Fanny lodged till the new one was habitable has been taken down, and is now being reconstructed in a new and better site for Belle and her boy, who are expected to arrive from Sydney this day week. I think I have given you as good an idea of my surroundings as I can manage 'right off the reel,' though I

dare say that gradually I shall find plenty to tell you that I have forgotten just now; and besides, there is so much that I have not properly seen or appreciated yet in the few days I have been here. But I think we shall be very comfortable; we hope soon to get a new cook (the present one has come into 'a fortune' and is going home to Germany), and with the English maid who comes with Belle, and the native servants, things ought to run very smoothly.

I wish you could pay me a visit this morning, for everything looks very lovely. The thermometer stands usually at from 80° to 84° in my room, and I keep the doors and the east windows open day and night; indeed, it seems to me to be hotter here than it was at Tautira, close to the sea, but Louis will not acknowledge this; and as old —— used to say, 'I *may* be wrang, but lord! it's no aften!' This morning I was glad to change my European clothes for a *holaku*, and I only wish my ideas of propriety would permit me to copy the natives a little more. . . . But I must try and give you some idea of what, if you were beside me, you would see. I am writing in my room, with both doors and three windows wide open. This house stands on a sort of plateau, which has been cleared of all save a few very fine tall trees, through which we look out to the north over the blue Pacific Ocean. From the east window I can see the little house for Belle, that has been

VAILIMA: SHOWING VAEA MOUNTAIN TO THE WEST OF THE HOUSE

christened 'Pineapple Cottage' because it stands in the midst of a plantation of that fruit, which grows wild here, in the woods. The carpenters are still at work on it, and the tapping of their hammers and the pleasant hum of their voices sound cheerful and homely. Beyond the cottage there is a lime and citron hedge, and behind that again the thick tropical bush, so restfully dark and leafy in this blaze of sunshine; and if you were to step on to the verandah and look to the west, you would see the high mountain under whose shelter we nestle, wooded to the very top, a mass of living green, magnificently verdant. To the south of the house only forest, undulating unending forest, is to be seen. The belt that lies nearest to us is at present being cleared by twenty-five Roman Catholic natives, called here 'popies'(!); they root out all the small trees and the undergrowth, and we hope that when they have got on a little further, we may be able to reach the lovely upper waterfall, at present so difficult of access that I cannot attempt to visit it. But there is beauty enough about us, as it is, to content me largely, as I am sure you would agree; though if you were really here and shared our eleven o'clock luncheon, some of its accompaniments might amuse you. For instance, as the flies are troublesome, one of the 'boys,' a fine-looking Tongan, comes in at all our meals armed with a long bunch of reeds to brush them away; he is nicely

tattooed, and wears a *pariu* (called here, by the way, a *lava-lava*), made out of an old red cotton tablecloth that Fanny had thrown away. The effect is most becoming on his brown skin, and he adds a world of barbaric picturesqueness to the repast. . . .

Vailima, Apia, May 26.

THE *Lübeck* arrived on Sunday and brought the last instalment of the 'family' from Sydney. Lloyd and I went down to meet them, and I only wish you could have seen the cavalcade starting on its return to Vailima: Belle, who is very nervous with horses, was mounted on Fanny's steed, which has been christened *The Widow*, from the ultra-propriety of its behaviour; I had the loan of a mount from Mrs. C—— (the wife of one of the missionaries); Lloyd rode his own *Macfarlane*; Mary, the English maid, had a hired horse, and little Austin rode behind Lloyd. The cockatoo—did I ever tell you of this clever bird of theirs?—was perched on Belle's shoulder, and all the small luggage followed in a light cart. We looked most lordly—as to numbers, at any rate. I won't say too much as to the equestrian abilities of some of us!

At present the additions to the family are scattered about the house, wherever a shake-down or a couch can be contrived for them, as Pineapple Cottage, though just roofed in, is still

far from habitable. We hope that by dint of a good deal of urging the carpenters may get at least the upper story ready by Thursday or Friday; and in the meantime Belle declares she does not mind any inconvenience, and would rather hang herself up on a nail behind a door in Vailima than have waited any longer at Sydney.

May 27.

I WISH you could share some of the pleasant hours we spend grouped on the verandah, whither we always betake ourselves after meals; lounging on easy-chairs or squatting on mats, according to taste. The verandah is twelve feet wide, and as it goes round three sides of the house, we can always be sure of shade: I wish I could add of a breeze also, but that is not so easily to be contrived. Still, we get all the air there is. When I am cool enough I knit stockings or else I read, while some of the others work. Just now I am reading *The Parent's Assistant* for little Austin's benefit, and when I come to the end of a story he reads some of the *Child's Garden* to me in return. . . .

No, you are not to imagine that we are ill because I do not tell you always to the contrary; it only means that we are all so well that I do not even remember the subject of health. And what a weight off my mind it is to be able to say as much, you can imagine. I really forget some-

times that Louis has ever been an invalid, he looks so fit and works so hard; and as to Fanny, it is simply amazing what she gets through. To-day, for instance, she has been planting orange-trees that came by the *Lübeck*. But I really do not think that any of us can be called idle, which is perhaps a considerate way of putting it, as certainly I do least of all! I think I must tell you how the work is divided amongst the members of the family. Well, one important job is 'chicken-man'; we have a fine enclosed run for the fowls at some distance from the house, but ever since they were removed to it, they appear—so far as results are concerned—to have given up laying. The hens in some mysterious fashion arrive at the 'clocking' stage without providing us with a single egg . . . a state of matters which we hope will be ended by a little supervision. Belle is lamp-cleaner to the establishment; and Lloyd for the present is housekeeper, in addition to his literary work. I say 'for the present,' as when our new and (according to his own account) very superior cook arrives, Lloyd declines to have anything to do with him, and insists on abdicating in favour of Fanny. My share of the household work I find rather hard to define; for one thing, I am the morning chaplain, as Louis can't appear at prayers unless we have them before 6 A.M., to which we all object. On Sundays I have quite a congregation: six of ourselves, John the

Hawaiian cook, Mr. K——, Emma (the house- and washing-maid), and Lafaële. The two last are Samoans, and call prayers 'making a church'; and as they think it is no church at all without singing, we ask them to sing a native hymn at the end, which they do very sweetly and melodiously, in parts. . . . Then—to return to my household duties—I wind up all the clocks in the house, and am looked upon as the responsible 'timekeeper' to the establishment, and I think I may claim to be the general purveyor of 'small wares' to the family at large. Here is a list of articles I was asked for in the course of one day: a piece of sponge, elastic, bromide of ammonia, taraxacum and nitric acid, needles, thread, and thimble, pen and ink, and a pencil. Does it not rather remind you of the mother's wonderful bag in the *Swiss Family Robinson*?

It appears this place is supposed, by the natives, to be greatly haunted by *itus*, which are ghosts or devils, I am not certain which, and are greatly feared. Several people told Louis that he should not disturb the idea, as it would have an excellent effect in keeping the natives from stealing; but when Lafaële, sent to work in the garden at some distance from the house, refused to stay there alone because he was 'afraid of the devils,' the plan seemed to have its drawbacks. Fanny, however, took him in hand; she assured him that *her* devils were much stronger than the

ones here, and would take care of him; and in proof of her power played an old trick upon him with great success. Laying a finger of each hand on his closed eyes, she shifted them deftly so that she touched him with two fingers of *one* hand only, and at the same instant gave him with the other a smart slap on the arm. It sounds very childish, but really feels strange to the victim, if he is not initiated; and at any rate it quite convinced Lafaële, who has worked by himself, and even gone out in the dark, with great bravery, ever since!

June 6.

WE all felt rather anxious on Monday, when the news arrived from Apia that Mataafa's followers had carried him off to another village to make him King, and that they had also broken open the prison and taken away all the prisoners. Till Wednesday we almost believed that war would be the result, but on that day they all returned and brought back the prisoners, and it is thought that for the present, at any rate, the danger is over. Louis, however, bids me tell you that even if you hear that war has broken out you must not be alarmed; war is very different here to what we are accustomed to think it, or to what I fear it still is in the remoter and more savage islands. Here it is more like a sort of 'tournament,' and very few lives are ever lost. If a band of fighting men should

come to Vailima, all that they would expect of us would be that we should kill some pigs, and give them a good meal!

It is wonderful how things seem to settle into place about us, though the carpenters are still here, and we cannot get fairly into order till they have finished their work. The 'popies' went off at the end of three days, and had to be wiled back by the promise of a gift; but it turned out that they had engaged to do the work at much under the usual rates (I don't know why), so when pay-day came round Louis gave them twice as much as had been arranged, to their great satisfaction and delight. It was quite a nice little scene when they came up to the verandah, where Louis awaited them with 'Henry' as interpreter; there was a great deal of speechifying, and they looked very well, clothed, if one can use the word, with good taste and simplicity, generally in a wreath of drooping green leaves round the loins and another of smaller ones upon the head. You have no idea how cool and pretty it looks on the brown skin, and of course it is always fresh and clean, which, when they are at work, the *lava-lavas* cannot be.

But this was quite a break in our quiet life. I have only once been to Apia since I arrived, and can't say I feel any desire to go again in the meantime; I am quite satisfied to lounge in the verandah, and gradually to absorb all the beauty about me. I am afraid you will get local inform-

ation and descriptions in very irregular instalments; they will only reach you as the facts dawn upon my perceptions here. Just now, for instance, I am reminded by a waft of scent that Fanny is making perfume to-day; the flower, which I have never seen before, is called by the natives *mussa-oi*, and is deliciously fragrant. I shall enclose a blossom in this, and you must tell me whether, at the end of the thousands of miles that lie between us, it has still preserved any of its scent. . . . Also, I am reminded by many little distant warbles that the woods here are full of birds; they do not exactly sing, but make a very pleasant little sound, a sort of soft mellifluous chattering, which is especially loud and clear in the early morning. At night it is the frogs that keep us lively. . . .

Louis is at work on *The Wreckers*, and I expect it will begin to appear in the August number of *Scribner's*; from what I have heard of it—he read us a particularly good chapter after lunch to-day—I think it is certain to be well received. It should be a very exciting story, and it seems to me that the characters are even unpleasantly lifelike!

June 10.

WE are really getting extraordinarily civilised these last few days. First the china arrived, and though, alas! a good deal has been broken, still it cheered our hearts to see the

'home-things' about us once more; then the new cook came and promises great things; but I think the culminating point of our elegance is that we have actually had people to afternoon tea! On Thursday Mr. C——, the missionary, called with his wife, and it was delightful to be able to entertain them in the orthodox way; they are both very nice, and I hope to be able to see more of them by and by, though, as the English service is in the evening, I can only go to church when it is moonlight. It seems, however, that the 'May-meetings,' when the natives bring in their contributions to the Mission, don't take place here till September, so I hope I may be able to attend them and send you an account, which should be interesting. . . . And we have had other callers too, quite a number of them; in fact, I am sure you would be surprised to find how many visitors we have already in this out-of-the-way spot. I think we know who is the attraction; but we try to believe that we are *all* equally charming!

Vailima, July 1, 1891.

THE worst of living at the other side of the world, with only a monthly mail between oneself and 'home,' is that the labour of preparing for that same mail is so great that it leaves us sick of the very sight of a pen for days after it has gone. I am only now beginning to feel fit for my journal-letter again; and Louis was

quite knocked up with overwork and had to keep to his room for two days' rest. No sooner did he reappear than he unfortunately got a sore throat; see how I am punished for boasting of his good health in my last letter! We had to send to Apia for Dr. F——; but by this time he is much better, though he still keeps to his room, and looks very thin and white.

We have had quite a busy ten days since I last wrote, though you must not imagine that anything very striking has happened. But we have now got all the furniture brought up, even the piano, which was the crowning achievement; and when you remember—or try to imagine—what the bridle-path through the forest from Apia is, you will agree with me it is something to boast of. It was carried all the way by eleven natives, who slung it in ropes supported by poles borne upon their shoulders; it took them eight hours, starting at 6 A.M. and arriving here just at 2 P.M. Then came the anxious moment of unpacking, but it proved to be not merely safe and unhurt, but actually in tune, which, considering the distance it has travelled, the time on the way, and the changes of climate, is truly amazing. There was but one more 'hill difficulty' to be surmounted, and that was the task of getting it up the rather narrow verandah stair to Louis's room; but that was happily achieved, and we now feel that we can really settle down, indoors at any rate, since our goods and chattels are all

here. Outside there is, of course, an immense deal still to do. We have had all the men hard at work clearing close about the house for some days; Lloyd had had a little fever, Henry and Emma had both been ill, and the doctor warned us that we should all suffer if the cut-down trees were allowed to lie near the house. So all hands were turned on to saw the trees into lengths and to cart them away to the woodhouse to be stored for fuel, and the women were set to pull up the weeds and pile them up for bonfires, as well as to light fires about the stumps and roots that had been left in the ground. At night the many fires looked very strange and picturesque. The mahogany trees were, however, not treated in so summary a fashion; they are sawn into convenient lengths and taken to Apia to be made into chairs and tables. It is a very beautiful variety, deeply red in colour and well grown. With all this, the front of the house begins to look quite nice, and I can scarcely realise how much the place is already changed since I first saw it three months ago.

On Sunday I rode down to Apia, in order to go to church; I went by myself and got on famously, of which I feel—as perhaps you may gather—not a little proud. I stayed for the night with Mrs. C——, the wife of one of the missionaries; the two houses of the Mission stand quite near each other in the same compound, with plenty of fine trees and flowers

round them, and a *near* view of the sea that I cannot help envying, though I know it is more airy up here, and must be healthier. I did not see anything of Apia, however, as I came home again early on Monday and found coffee-planting busily going on; the next thing will be *cacao*, as a gentleman from one of the German plantations says the ground by the burnside is exactly suited to it, and Fanny hopes to make it succeed.

We have had a really wonderful transformation scene about us lately; the tall mahogany trees have changed their leaves. They first became a lovely autumnal orange tint, very rich and glowing, and we could see them here and there all the way down to Apia marking the course of the burn; this lasted for a week or two, and then suddenly, as if by the waving of a magician's wand, they were all clothed in complete suits of the tenderest spring green. The new leaves seem to push off the old ones just when they are ready to unfold, and the tree turns in a few hours from gold to green. It is so sudden as to be almost bewildering, and very beautiful also. But I think all nature is beautiful here. Last Saturday I went for a walk in the bush with Lloyd and Belle; a road has been made for more than a mile up a gentle slope, and it was dry and fairly clean underfoot, with delicious lights and shadows playing through the trees. Lloyd and Belle were both armed with long knives to cut down saplings and shrubs, and

I pulled up wild bananas and other weeds; for the worst thing about this place is, that unless constantly cleared every road and path gets overgrown. However, a very little work would make that particular path a very good one for riding, and Fanny says that if buffalo grass is planted it keeps other things from coming up. I confess that I found the weeding as entrancing as Louis does, and could scarcely persuade myself to give it up and return home.

There was again a great talk of war among the natives last week, though nothing came of it; but ever since the last outbreak they seem to live in a state of constant excitement. I am told it has had a very bad effect upon them in another way; while war was going on they got into the habit of stealing, and when it ceased they did not give the practice up. The Germans seem to be the principal sufferers, and I expect that the natives, like Andrew Fairservice, think there cannot be much harm in 'spoiling the Egyptians.' It is a pity, nevertheless, and may have lasting bad effects both on themselves and on their reputation. I have already heard a lack of honesty imputed to them in general, which I believe they really do not deserve.

July 12.

AUSTIN got some scratches on his feet, which began to inflame, a very common trouble here; so he has had to spend two days

with his feet in Condy's fluid, and to-day is pronounced nearly well—a good thing, as we had to fill up his enforced idleness with an amount of reading which threatened to exhaust our suitable literature. Lafaële has also had a bad toe for some time past, and when Dr. F—— was here he took out the nail, and bade him keep quiet for a day or two till it healed. This, however, we could not induce Lafaële to do; so yesterday he announced that there was a devil in his toe, and he must have a Samoan medicine-man up from Apia to drive it out. In the afternoon the medicine-man duly arrived, and Fanny interviewed him. He said it was quite true that there was a devil in the toe, and the great thing was to get him out the same way he went in, for if he went *up* the leg he would certainly kill the man. Fanny reminded Lafaële that she had kept him safe from all devils since he had been living with us, but the medicine-man got out of that difficulty very cleverly, declaring that the devil had gone in a year ago, before Lafaële had come to us, and had been lying dormant ever since! This was, of course, unanswerable. Fanny hoped to see something wonderful in the way of incantations, but to her disappointment he did nothing but put on a sort of dressing of leaves soaked in coconut oil; however, his 'medicine' must have had something in it, as this morning Lafaële announced with triumph that his foot was 'more better, and he sleep all

night.' . . . I hope Lafaële will not take to the native habit of getting 'tired' of service, as we should miss him dreadfully; our two women, Emma and Java, have already wearied of being so far in the bush, and we have now the wife and daughter of a native minister to do the washing, etc. As washerwomen, I regret to say they are rather indifferent, but they are nice women, and sing so sweetly at prayers that we quite enjoy it.

A Mr. G—— from Apia has taken a place not far from us, and just on the road into the town. He is a pleasant young man with a very nice native wife, and we shall quite enjoy having them within easy reach of us on foot. We hope also that in time they may help us in the matter of getting the forest-road improved.

On Tuesday I made quite a little outing all by myself. I rode down to Apia, and left my horse at the Mission; then I was rowed across part of the bay to the English consul's (where, by the bye, I had to be carried ashore; but my 'boy' did it most handily, and seemed to think nothing of my weight). After that I was rowed back again, and paid several other calls in Apia itself, finally riding home in the moonlight, the first time I had attempted such a thing quite unattended. The Widow cantered all the way as long as the road was good enough, which is about half the distance; and I think I never enjoyed anything more than the cool bright

silence of the bush. We are having lovely weather just now, with deliciously fresh breezes that thoroughly temper this heat — indeed, Mr. K—— has asked leave for a week to get change of air, because *the cold climate* does not agree with him! I look at the thermometer in my room every morning about 6.30, and it varies from 63° to 75°; whenever it goes below 70° it feels quite chilly, but it has only once been as low as 63°. Still it is surely an ideal 'winter' temperature!

Vailima, July 24, 1891.

LAST Sunday I had another quiet ride home from Apia through the moonlit forest; it was very beautiful, almost as light as day, though in the worse half of the road the dense shadows of the trees were rather confusing. I wish I could see any likelihood of the path being soon improved. On Monday Louis went down to Apia to try and get Vailima included in the municipal district, which he had been advised would give him a better chance of getting a proper road made. He started in the forenoon, paid several calls, dined with the Land Commissioners, and did not get home till 10 P.M. Then on Wednesday he went down again to attend a meeting of Council, and present his petition; but I am afraid nothing will come of it in the meantime, at any rate, as it appears they have no power under the treaty to take us

in. They have promised, however, to apply for increased powers, and hope to get them . . . some day, I suppose.

Yesterday we had a young naturalist to lunch; he wanted to shoot some 'pigeons' in the bush, but was unsuccessful, and only got a small green bird, which we were sorry he had shot. There are plenty of so-called pigeons about us, that fill the woods with very homelike cooings, though I am not sure what their real species is; they are very pretty birds, with beautiful plumage. And there is another that reminds me of a thrush, though it is much smaller and differently coloured; the song is much less articulate, so to say, but nevertheless reminds me strangely and pleasantly of home. They are not very timid if we walk through the bush, but they seldom come much out into the open, about the house. Just now Louis, surrounded by a little group of assistants, is busy weeding the 'lawn,' and taking stones out of it. We have already a beautiful green patch before the door about the size of the plot at Colinton Manse. Did I tell you that grass seeds cannot be sown here where they are to stay, but in a seed-bed, and are then taken up and planted out like little lettuces, or anything similar? It is very interesting to watch each little plant throw out long shoots like a creeper, till they meet each other, and finally make a continuous patch of green. It gives me a sense of active, intelligent plant-life that I never felt

before. We use for this purpose a very fine native grass; for grazing purposes a coarser kind is better, called buffalo grass, that grows much taller, and is not so suitable for a lawn.

August 3.

YESTERDAY morning I rode down early to Apia to the native church to join in the Communion, as there is only an evening service in English, and no arrangements as yet for church membership. I liked the native service very much, and it reminded me of Tautira;[1] I could almost imagine I was back among our good friends there whom we shall never forget. The church is a large one, and it was well filled with nicely dressed natives, some of them sitting on benches, and many on mats. The minister occupied a small raised platform over which a reading-desk did duty as a pulpit; the Communion-table stood at his right hand, and when we went in was covered all over with a white cloth. All who brought 'lines' from other churches handed them as they came in to the native minister, who read them aloud, while Mr. C——, who was to dispense the Communion, left his platform, and went to a seat near the door in order to publicly receive the young communicants into the church. As he gave them the 'right hand of fellowship,' he gave also to each individually a short address. It ended

[1] See *From Saranac to the Marquesas*, p. 193.

something like this: 'Your name is written to-day in the book of the Church on earth; it is for the Master Himself to inscribe it in the Book of Life above, where I hope it will remain to all eternity.' This was in English, but all the rest of the service was in Samoan. The bread was cut into very small pieces, and handed from one to another on salvers; the wine was coconut juice. The deacons were dressed in white *lava-lavas* and white coats or shirts, and Mr. C—— himself was entirely in white: it looked very pure and simple, and I could not but think of the 'white linen clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints.' . . .

I have been greatly interested in finding a nutmeg-tree growing in our 'avenue.' The nutmegs are ripening just now, and fall off the tree as they become ready; they are covered with a soft outer husk, which splits open, and shows a beautiful golden-orange lining. This of course is the *mace*, which clings to the nutmeg in a wrapping of thin fibrous strips; or rather, not to the nutmeg itself, but to the very hard shell that encloses it, and which, I am told, must be steamed on a stove or exposed to any strong damp heat *for a month* before the actual nutmeg can be got out of it. It is certainly very well protected. I am drying some mace in the sun, and shall send you a specimen; and later on I suppose we shall also have some of 'our own' nutmegs.

This has been quite a gay week, with many people coming and going to lunch and tea; one day we had the Land Commissioners, and I must tell you an absurd story of Mr. I——, the American Commissioner, and Louis. Mr. I—— happened to tell us that one of his daughters had been born on Christmas Day, and always complained bitterly that she had never had a birthday present in her life, and for all practical purposes did not possess a birthday at all. Louis promptly declared that he really had no further use for his, which only served nowadays to call attention to his increasing years, so he would willingly make it over to Miss I——. At once a sort of legal document was drawn up, solemnly handing over the 13th November to her 'for her sole use and behoof' henceforward as a birthday, and the paper was despatched to Vermont with all due formalities! . . . I, of course, pointed out to Louis that in future he need not expect anything more in the shape of birthday presents or congratulations. . . .

Fanny has not been very well lately—I fancy the result of a long course of overwork, as for many months now she has really laboured prodigiously over the place, and I have often predicted a breakdown in the end. So on Thursday afternoon it was suddenly settled that she should go off in the *Wainui* for a thorough rest and change. It is not settled yet whether she is to stay in Fiji, where she can be perfectly

quiet, or go on to Auckland. At first it was proposed that Lloyd should go with her; but it was decided that he was so much needed here he should stay at home; and indeed, as the *Wainui* sailed rather sooner than usual, it took us all our time to get her alone ready for departure by 2.30 P.M. on Friday.

Since she left, the family has been principally engaged, I think, in cooking. Our German cook, who was sent to Apia on Land Commission business, never returned, and finally sent word that his health would not allow him to do so. He was not much loss, as he was leaving anyway at the end of the month; he had not turned out the success we hoped, none of us liked his cooking, and he was so delicate and nervous we did not dare to criticise. Also, he can't stand our *cold climate*! It is true the thermometer at half-past six this morning was 69°, but at noon it was 90°, and I find it too hot indoors for my taste, and only enjoyable on the breezy verandah. . . . However, as Paul, who is generally available to act as his substitute, is laid up with an attack of pneumonia from sitting in draughts when overheated, it leaves a domestic gap which the family has to fill. As a useless member, who only eats, I may add that the results are most successful and appetising. Here is a *menu* that may interest you: onion soup, roast mutton with spices, boiled *taro*, rice, stewed tomatoes and

onions, and a salad made of small wild tomatoes and watercress. The wild tomatoes are no larger than cherries, but very well flavoured, and grow in the most obliging and convenient manner in the tangle of weeds about the kitchen-door. We thought our *chef* very extravagant in the way of vegetables, but all the dishes were excellent and well served. Our native servants, moreover, are highly picturesque, much more so than in other islands that I have visited; a few wear *holakus*, but there is a great deal more variety of dress than in either Hawaii or Tahiti, and the people here display more of the figure. Faüuma (one of our women) often wears a white *lava-lava* and a muslin scarf put round the neck and crossed over the bosom, which looks very cool and comfortable, though I do not quite see my way to following the fashion in my own case. At other times she wears a red *lava-lava*, made, I think, out of a discarded curtain, with two red and yellow handkerchiefs knotted on her shoulders, the one hanging down in front, the other behind. Lafaële's costume also varies considerably, but when he appears at meals he always wears a *lava-lava* of some bright colour.

Louis has taken a lease of a small ranch near us, called 'Hunter's Rest.' The advantage of it is that we shall thus have plenty of oranges, coconuts, and bananas to supply our needs till our own trees are bearing, and we shall also have ample grazing for our horses and cows.

We bought two more cows from the man who was giving up the ranch, and one of them has had a calf, so we have a large supply of milk and cream, and can make our own butter, and as we expect a third calf shortly, the supply will still increase. The only bother has been about the milking, Lafaële being the only person who knows anything about it, and his methods are decidedly peculiar. He brings the calf to its mother and lets it begin to suck, then pulls it away with a rope and milks the cow a little; then lets it back, and pulls it away again, and so on, with what a waste of time and labour—not to speak of milk—as you can imagine. We have at last succeeded in convincing him that it is not necessary, and the calf is now weaned, but not till it is four months old. I fancy that at home they are taken away at the very first, or soon after.

As to our poultry, dire events have been taking place; out of ninety-five chickens seventy disappeared mysteriously, and it was only by careful watching that the thief was discovered to be a horrid old cannibal-minded drake, who paid on the spot for his malpractices. While I am on the subject of our live stock, I may as well add that we have no less than *twelve* cats, and this is not at all too many, as bush-rats are very plentiful and venturesome. 'Mother' leads the clan, and she has two grown-up children called respectively 'Henry' and 'Maud'; there

is also a Samoan cat named 'Pouch.' Then Mother has four kittens, of which only one as yet is christened 'Cinderella,' from her pronounced love for the fireside, in spite of the climate. Maud has also three kittens, but as they are barely ten days old and have not yet emerged from their basket, they are only prospectively useful. You see, taking us all in all, we are decidedly a numerous family!

Vailima, August 22, 1891.

I REALLY don't know what we shall come to, if the 'backwoods' continue so gay. There has been quite a succession of parties lately, and though I go *out* to none, yet I can't prevent them coming *in* to me! Louis, Lloyd, and Belle all went to a dinner-party at the Chief Justice's last Saturday, and it was a great success. There were several officers from the U.S. man-of-war—fourteen guests in all—but Belle was the only lady, and came home announcing that she had been 'undoubtedly the best-looking and best-dressed woman' there! Louis did not seem at all overtired, though he had not been at such a large party for at least twelve years; and fancy him riding home after it, at eleven P.M.! On Monday he was invited to dine with the Land Commissioners, and I was more than a little uneasy at his going out again so soon; however, he not only

went without ill results, but stayed all night, and lunched next day on the beautiful yacht that is lying just now in Apia harbour. When he came home to us, he announced that we were to expect the German Commissioner, and one or two other gentlemen, to lunch on Wednesday, while the yacht party was coming to tea on Thursday afternoon. Of course our three new cooks, who have really been excelling themselves lately, determined to accomplish wonders on this occasion; and the preparations were really very amusing. Belle prepared some clever *menus*, full of local allusions; for instance, the soup was commemorative of the fact that the U.S. man-of-war—the *Iroquois*—had lately been delayed by a breakdown of her engines, and did not arrive till long overdue. The Municipal Council, a very new institution here, gave its name to another dish; the 'long-handled' potatoes were a hit at the German firm, so called from the enormous length of its name; and 'the pie—or its equivalent' was a hit at the discussions that have been going on over the currency, the Germans wishing to introduce the German mark, and all the others determined to keep it out. Each guest carried off his own *menu*, and they really gave rise to a great deal of amusement. Otherwise, also, in spite of the conventions, the luncheon was quite a success. Our three cooks wore very becoming paper caps, and made no

secret of their responsibilities; indeed, Lloyd only appeared with the roast, as he stayed in the kitchen till then to see that everything was right. We have a new boy, Talolo, and he and Lafaële were in attendance, and looked very neat in their white shirts, bright *lava-lavas*, and wreaths of flowers on their hair; and to compensate for the lack of a withdrawing-room, we screened off the end of the verandah outside of my room with *tapa*, and made quite a nice little 'cosy-corner,' sheltered both from sun and wind. Here we put chairs, couches and a table, and here the *hors-d'œuvres* before lunch, and the coffee after, were served.

On the next day, the 'yacht party' turned out to be a bigger 'tea-fight' than we expected, as Mr. and Miss G—— arrived early, bringing with them Seomano, an important chief, and Faitalia, his wife, who is said to be the most highly born woman in Samoa, and very clever to boot. They have no children of their own, but have adopted many, of whom the present Mrs. G—— is one. We were all having tea on the balcony when the yacht party arrived, Mrs. L—— driven by our friend Mr. H—— in a small carriage, and her husband riding. As this was the first time that a carriage of any kind had driven up to our 'front door,' we felt it to be quite an event in our existence here. In spite of some heterogeneous elements all went off very well indeed, and our Samoan guests were voted

by every one to be delightfully simple and dignified.

While Fanny is away, we are having her vegetable-garden much enlarged, and everything looks thriving. The asparagus grows particularly well, though it will be some time before it is old enough to be of use; but we have plenty of onions and egg-plants and tomatoes, and both red and green peppers, and a kind of bean that I have not seen before. The *barbedines*[1] are nearly ripe, and are delicious both in tarts and eaten with sugar and claret; and there are oranges and limes in all stages, some of the latter newly in blossom, so that I fancy there will not be any period of the year when we shall be wholly without them. This is a great boon, as fruit is almost indispensable in this climate. As yet we have not very many flowers; in fact we have not done more than plant a few slips from time to time; but there are pink and crimson monthly roses, quantities of the beautiful crimson hibiscus, a sort of three-ply white convolvulus, tuberoses, and a bright scarlet flower like a salvia. There are one or two other blooming plants of which I don't know the names, but these are the most plentiful and striking. As we have also a great many beautifully variegated leaves, and any number of ferns, there is never any lack for table decoration; and I have no doubt that Fanny will

[1] A variety of Passiflora.

come home laden with plants and seeds. Louis and I are terribly lacking in knowledge of these matters, but we vie with each other in appreciativeness. . . .

To give you my monthly *résumé* of the live stock, I am glad to tell you the chickens are thriving, and there have been no more mysterious disappearances since the cannibal drake was disposed of. Our 'cooks' have now taken the milk-supply into their charge, with very good results; we are revelling in unlimited milk and cream, and Lou professes to be anxious about his increasing bulk. One change—I think an improvement—I can take to my own credit; there was a small room off the kitchen where the cook used to sleep, a plan I never liked, and I took the opportunity of suggesting that this room, now empty, would make an excellent milk-house. Lloyd jumped at the idea, and immediately set to work to put up shelves, knock out windows, and otherwise convert it to its new purpose; and now we are quite proud of our dairy, with its neatly labelled pans, and take all our visitors to see it.

Now that the building and carting are pretty well at an end, we are gradually getting quit of our European servants, as they teach the natives bad habits, and somehow or another there is always friction. The carter, for instance, has gone to Honolulu, and Mr. K—— has married a half-caste and settled in Savaii.

Paul is better from his attack of pneumonia, and has got an appointment as overseer on the German plantation, so he too leaves at the end of the month. That leaves us only Mary, our maid, of all the white servants; but as she lives indoors and does not come in contact with the natives, we hope to keep her.

Vailima, September 20, 1891.

JUST after I despatched my last letter, Fanny arrived unexpectedly on the *Lübeck*, looking very well and thoroughly set up by the change of air. Unfortunately she found Louis with a cold, and the excitement of her unexpected arrival, I think, made him worse. However, he is already much better, and talks of leaving his room to-day or to-morrow. Fanny got here by the merest chance, it appears; the *Lübeck* happened to be two days late, so when she reached Tonga, where she expected to have to wait at least a fortnight, she found the *Lübeck* just weighing anchor, and was transhipped with all her possessions at a moment's notice. We are all very glad to get her back, but we did not welcome the Indian cook she brought with her; indeed, there was quite an outcry, as we are more than content with our three present *chefs*, and Talolo, the new boy, is also very teachable. It has been arranged, however, that 'Abdul' is to be handed on to Mr. H——, whose cook leaves him at the end of the month;

and in the meantime he works for us. We will not allow that he cooks as well as 'the family,' but he certainly gives us most delightful curries.

We now find that we have so many visitors that we seriously think of fixing on a weekly day 'at home.' Lloyd has to do a good deal of the entertaining, and it takes up much of his time; and pleasant as it is to see our friends, there is work—and plenty of it—that must be done. At the same time we honestly enjoy the coming and going, and it is delightful to feel they care to come so far to see us.

Fanny, as I prophesied, came back from Fiji laden with plants and seeds, and is busy getting them all into the ground. She brought an india-rubber-tree and a custard-apple, and roots of jasmine, gardenia, frangipani, and night-blooming Cereus; there are many more that I cannot just now remember. During her absence a great deal of clearing has been done, and things look wonderfully tidy; new walks have been made in several directions, and all of them have been appropriately christened. A very pretty arch-way through the lemon hedge in Fanny's garden is called *Auntie's Arch*, so you see you are not forgotten. . . .

Yesterday Belle and I had quite a small adventure. Miss G—— had told us that there was a very fine waterfall on the Vaisigano river, and had suggested that we should go with her to see it; so yesterday we started with this

intention, but found that both Mrs. G—— and Miss G—— had gone back to Apia. We did not wish to be done out of our excursion, however, so we set off to find our way through the woods by ourselves; there seemed to be an excellent path which we had only to follow. The wood was so dark and lonely and the way so long that presently we began to fear we had mistaken the road; till quite suddenly we came out into a lovely sunny valley, with a rapid 'Highland' river rushing amidst rocks and taking two fine leaps over them. One of these was wide and low, but the other very high and narrow, and it fell into a dark pool far below. The trees on our side looked homelike, and for a moment my heart leaped with the memory of many dear and lovely Scottish glens; but opposite to us rose a bank covered with superb tree ferns, which on cooler inspection rather spoiled the illusion. I was very much struck with the loneliness of the place, and the beautiful quiet sunshine that filled it. On our way homewards we took a wrong turning, and for a time really feared that we were 'lost in the bush,' which was not a pleasant sensation. We had told no one where we were going, so they could have no idea where to look for us; and we did not at all fancy the thought of spending a night in the forest. Fortunately, by going back a good bit, we got into the right track again, and got home safely just before dark,

pretty well tired out with two and a half hours' steady walking in the tropics — not a bad achievement, I consider.

October 3.

LAST Sunday being 'moonless,' I arranged to stay all night with Mrs. C—— at the Mission, and started about 5 P.M. so as to get to Apia before dark. When I reached the foot of the avenue I found a fallen tree projecting across the road, which The Widow, for all her amiability, absolutely declined to pass; she stood stock-still, and whenever I urged her on she turned aside and bolted into the bush, a most uncomfortable proceeding for me. After three trials I gave it up, and meekly came back home; but Louis at once had his horse Jack saddled, and he and Fanny set off to teach The Widow that she was not to get her own way so easily. Ultimately, but only with a good deal of trouble and a diligent use of the whip, she was made to pass the obstacle. I was sorry not to get down, but it could not be helped. Mr. C——'s companion, the younger missionary in Apia, has lately been appointed native advocate before the Land Commissioners, to uphold the interests of the Samoans in any disputes, as he is so thoroughly familiar with the language, and with all their affairs, while Mr. H——, from Savaii, has been appointed to take his place in the meantime in the Mission work. This is quite

necessary, as it is a very busy season of the year at present, and the other missionary could not manage single-handed. Wednesday, indeed, was a very important day here: it was the Apia 'May-meeting,' when the inhabitants of eighteen neighbouring villages all come together to pay in their subscriptions to the Mission funds. Belle and I went down and found it a most interesting affair; the people of each village walked in procession, two by two, the men by themselves and the women by themselves, dressed in their best and brightest garments. The women were always headed by the *taupo*, or *maid of the village*, a sort of virgin queen who is chosen by vote, and is waited on with real reverence by a bodyguard of girls. She keeps her position till she marries, when another is elected to fill her place; but only girls of good character and beauty—to the native eye—are eligible, and I believe they have, *ex officio*, a curious position of sanctity, as if in a way they represented the chastity of all their village. . . . The wives of the 'Members of Parliament' (more properly a council) were all dressed alike in crimson, with green wreaths on their hair tied with crimson ribbons; the women of one village wore *tapa*, which stuck out round them like crinolines, and had trimmed garlands of leaves round their heads and waists. Another set wore bright orange *lava-lavas*, and loose bodices to match, with wreaths of white flowers; and still

another had very noticeable garlands that entirely covered their hair, made apparently of bright yellow crinkled tissue-paper, which had a very gay effect. Amongst the men, the most striking dresses were worn by the 'Members of Parliament,' who are all chiefs; their double skirts of *tapa* stuck out very quaintly and becomingly, and their waists and breasts were garlanded with green. They were exceedingly tall, fine handsome fellows, who walked with an air as if the whole world belonged to them. The rest of the men, including the students from Malua, and the boys attending the Mission schools, wore the white *lava-lava* and jacket, which always looks so suitable and clean and cool.

We were convened in a large field, under trees, the shade of which was eked out by awnings of various kinds, boat-sails, mats, *tapa*, and coconut leaves sewed together, being the most general. There was a table for the speakers, and chairs and benches for the Europeans, while the natives sat upon the ground; the king had a tent all to himself, where he sat with the queen at his feet, and the crimson wives of the M.P.'s crowded round him. In former days each person brought his or her subscription personally to the meeting, but that plan was found so cumbrous that now each village pays to its native pastor, and he brings it in and reads a list of the subscriptions aloud.

As the 'Members of Parliament,' however, have no special pastor of their own, they still claim their right to present their own subscriptions; so after some really beautiful singing and a prayer, and while Mr. C—— was reading out the sums already received, the crimson ladies (a most portly party) first marched up one by one and tossed each her subscription on the table, and then the crinolined gentlemen approached with immense dignity from the other side, and threw down theirs. . . .

After several speeches from the missionaries and native pastors, which, of course, I could not understand, His Majesty, King Malietoa Laupepa, came forward and made a long address; this was the first time I had seen him, and I was glad to find that he looked much stronger and younger than I expected. I believe he is now recovering from all the bad usage he suffered during the last war and its consequences. When his speech was over, we came away with Mrs. C—— to get something to eat, and afterwards we returned to see the distribution of food which follows the meeting. All the people bring provisions down with them, and the residents of Apia supply their share, but instead of each eating his own, every one gives to his neighbours. A whole village advances, singing to a group sitting near by on the ground; or sometimes instead of singing they merely call out, 'A gift of love from ——

to ——,' naming the two villages concerned. Each carries something in his hand, a small loaf, a couple of ship's biscuits, a fish cooked and wrapped in green leaves, or vegetables and fruit wrapped up in the same fashion; and these are dropped into baskets made of plaited coconut leaves, which the recipients hold ready. But this is not the end; those who receive the gifts hand them on to others, and Mr. C—— assures me that they continue to do so for an hour or two; though in the long-run every one gets enough to eat—even for native appetites! —and goes home replete and satisfied, and amply content with the annual festival of the London Missionary Society.

I think we are fairly beginning the rainy season, at least the weather has been very broken for some days. On Friday I started for Apia, but had to turn ignominiously back, drenched to the skin; Saturday was wet again, and kept all our party, who had been invited to some private theatricals at the English consul's, grumblingly at home. Yesterday was no better, and to-day we have had thunder and heavy showers; but we are thankful for the rain, which is sorely needed by the dried-up river, and half-empty tanks, and all the young trees and flowers and Indian corn. I fancy it will do good in other ways too, cleansing and clearing both the air and the ground. All our young people have had slight fever of late, and we think they get it in

the banana-patch, which is rather swampy. But otherwise we are all very well.

The rain has rather put a stop to our social gaieties, but you will be amused to hear that Louis took the whole family (save me) to Apia last Thursday, to a . . . circus!! and a very good one, too, I believe, though it seems odd to meet with such a thing in a Pacific island. They were all delighted with the cleverness of the ponies and dogs, and the tent was so well ventilated that Lou (who enjoyed it as much as any of them) was not a whit the worse of the expedition, which served as a sort of farewell festivity to our good Henry. I think I told you that he is a chief in Savaii, and only worked for us to get a little money before returning home; his name is really *Simolé*, though he seems to prefer to be called 'Henry.' We did not expect to lose him just now, but his people wanted him back amongst them, because they 'had no one but him'; so, as he said to Louis, he felt that he must go 'to take care of my poor old children.' We were all quite sorry to say good-bye, and as he left on the Thursday, it was arranged that he should dine in Apia with 'the family,' and go to the circus with them afterwards. Fanny would have liked you to see her walk in complacently leaning on Henry's arm; he looked exceedingly well in a shepherd's check *lava-lava*, a black coat, white shirt and tie, but bare feet and head in the Samoan fashion. I have never seen a

native here wear anything on his head but a wreath of green leaves, either in rain or the hottest sunshine.

Two days ago I was much distressed to hear that the Turks had allowed the Russian vessels to pass through the Dardanelles, and that England had taken possession of an island in the Mediterranean, and landed troops upon it. I hope and trust this does not mean an outbreak of European war; that would be terrible indeed, on all accounts, and I am selfish enough to dread any interference with my journey home eighteen months hence. I am afraid that in one's heart one is apt to be petty-minded. . . .

Vailima, October 18.

I WAS quite wrong about the rainy season, for which we are only now making serious preparations; one would think we were expecting to be regularly in a state of siege. Lloyd has been ordering provisions on quite a large scale from Sydney, and explained to the manager of the store that during the wet months our road was 'exactly like a Highland river, only, unfortunately, without the trout.' An important thing that I have taken in hand is the varnishing of all our books with spirit varnish to keep off damp and insects. I have done my own and begun on Louis's; but it is a terribly lengthy job, and I do not know when I shall be through with it. I now know that it would be impossible to bring

well-bound or valuable books out here, one has to be content with such as are strictly required for use; and I feel very glad to have found this out while I have so few that I really cherish with me. The varnish does preserve them to a certain extent, but it takes a weary time to get through all Lou's books. What with this as an extra job, and teaching little Austin, which I have undertaken, I have no time to spare; though I am not a whit more busy than the rest of this 'hive of bees.' Even Lou is writing both morning and afternoon just now, and when he has a spare moment flies to his weeding. I forget whether I told you that *The Wreckers* is already running in *Scribner's Magazine*, and began, I think, in August; Lou hopes to have it finished by the next mail-time, and he will then feel himself a free man. For the last four years he has been little better than a slave, and he has resented the tie terribly. For one thing, he will certainly write no more *Letters from the Pacific*—he has never liked or enjoyed them in the least; and after this I hope he will never bind himself down to a contract of the kind. It does not suit him, and I don't believe he could ever carry out such an arrangement without suffering from it. He is wonderfully well just now, and seems better in this showery weather than when it was quite dry; he stands getting wet in a wonderful way, and rides home through the frost at night as if he had never been ill in

his life. I believe I have told you that already; but can't you imagine what it means to me to see him able for such feats?

We are very much interested in a fancy-dress ball that is to come off on the 9th November in honour of the Prince of Wales's birthday. The G——s are going, and will take Belle with them; and of course we have all been assisting to choose their costumes. Fanny has designed one for Mrs. G—— to wear, which will be most effective, I think; she is a very pretty Samoan girl, and the natural native dignity will help to make her a charming 'Zenobia, Empress of the East.' She is to wear a Greek dress, made in part of cotton-stuff with a gold pattern stamped upon it; and over this a crimson chuddah is to be correctly draped, with a gold belt and many beads of various kinds, and an elaborate gold crown. But I shall give you further particulars when it comes off. We think 'Fanua' will look very striking. By the bye, Samoans use no titles such as Mr., Mrs., or Miss, but call you simply by your Christian name, which sounds a little surprising sometimes; as when Talolo says, 'Belle, I too much love my mother, may I go see to-night?' or when Lafaële remarks, 'You ask Lloyd to give me candle.' . . . So we have now arranged that they are to use our native names, with which they have already christened most of us: Lou is *Tusitala*, or *teller of stories* —is it not suitable and pleasant sounding?

Fanny is *Tamaitai*, which means, I believe, *high-born lady*; Lloyd is *Loya*; and Belle is *Tuila*, a name which we think very pretty, but don't yet know what it means. Neither little Austin nor I have as yet been dignified by having Samoan names given to us. 'Have patience,' Lou says to us, 'and wait till you too attain to these honours.' . . .

I must not forget to tell you that I am now the proud possessor of . . . a circus horse! Before the show left Apia, they sold two of their horses who were bad sailors; and Fanny praised this one so much for its quietness and easy paces that I decided to buy it. It is a vivid piebald; and now that I have got it, they all torment me by declaring that the children will run after me and expect me to stand up on the saddle and dance! I warn them all that if they say much more, I shall insist on Fanny's exchanging 'Tin Jack' with The Widow. . . . I am sorry to say I have not yet tried my new steed, as he has hurt his foot somehow; there seems a fate against our having two horses in 'going order' that will carry a lady. Samoans know nothing about horses, and, out of ignorance, are apt to be very cruel to them; they have to be overlooked in these matters continually. When they ride themselves, they go at a full gallop up and down hill whatever the path may be; and they think nothing of putting a saddle on the top of a bad sore, and will do it unless care-

fully watched. When the river here was dry and water had to be carried for all the horses, Lafaële calmly told Fanny that *his* horse was quite different to hers, and did not require water at all!

November 7.

WE are near neighbours to an affliction: influenza has broken out in Apia, many of the stores are closed, and we are so afraid of bringing the infection to Louis that we keep away from the place altogether. It is strange what a violent epidemic form it always takes in the South Seas; in some of the islands they call it 'the poison,' and it strikes one as a good name for such a scourge. I trust we may escape it, however, as we live up here amongst the healthy breezes.

At present Fanny is planting out cacao, mango, and breadfruit seeds; the first are a terrible bother, but she has now three hundred plants nearly ready to be put into the ground. Each seed, I must tell you, must first be rolled in ashes to destroy insects, and then planted in a little basket made of plaited coconut leaves; these baskets are kept on the verandah till the 'shoots' appear, and then, basket and all, they are put into their permanent places, and the coconut leaf rots away in the earth as the roots enlarge and strike downwards. It entails a lot of labour, but should repay her, we hope, in the end.

The oranges are at present in perfection, very juicy and sweet; and now that they are looked after, we can count on having them, as well as coconuts and bananas, throughout the year. Just now we are also rejoicing in unlimited pine-apples, mangoes, and *barbedines*, the latter being very delicious and quite the South Sea equivalent—though I won't say equal—to strawberries at home.

November 9.

THE ball has been put off till the 25th on account of the influenza, and, unless things improve, it remains to be seen whether it can be managed then. I hope so, for the sake of the young people. Fanny made a lovely crown for Mrs. G——, covered with gold net and studded with many-coloured stones that she had picked up at Royat and elsewhere; it is most becoming, and you can imagine the pleasure it gives to Zenobia! Miss G—— is to represent a 'water-witch'; her dress is very pale green, decorated with coral and sea-shells, and as she is very fair, with a lovely complexion, it ought to be charming. Belle goes as a 'Spanish Lady,' with a black lace skirt, trimmed with gold, and a black bodice opening over an under one of white. She is to have a high comb in her hair and a crimson flower; and she hopes people will think that she has got her fan, with a bull-fight painted on it, specially from Spain

for the occasion! Talking of Spain reminds me that I was amused to find that my plan of leaving off stockings for coolness is the universal fashion in Mexico; where even at a ball they wear lovely little satin slippers on their bare feet. Indeed, I cannot see any more objection to showing our feet uncovered than our hands; true, there is the question of keeping them clean and unhurt, but if shoes are worn this difficulty disappears. At all events—and I speak with feeling!—it is better than deliberately walking about in good stockings with *no* shoes on, as Lou does, to my righteous indignation. Henceforth I mean to draw the line at that, and I tell him I will neither knit nor darn any more socks for him unless he learns to treat them better. . . .

As I began this letter, so it seems I must end; we are still making preparations for the 'storms.' A very strong-roofed woodhouse has been built a little way behind the kitchen, and connected with it by a covered way, that will shelter us in any weather; Fanny, too, has had wooden shutters added outside the unprotected windows of her room. In mine an extra door has been cut in the partition between this and the pantry; so that in the event of a great storm, when it would be impossible to open the large doors to the front, I can still reach the dining-room by the pantry and back verandah. I wonder a little what it will feel like to *need* all these precautions, and whether we shall suffer in any way from the

damp. At present Lou is not very well; but the climate must not bear the blame of it. As a matter of fact, he wrote so tragic and exciting a chapter of *The Wreckers* the other day that he was altogether knocked up by it; indeed, I do not think he got over the effect till yesterday, when he was able to tell us that at last it was finished. It was a great weight off all our minds, and we rejoiced along with him.

This is the last letter that will reach you this year, so I must close it by wishing you every blessing and happiness, and to you and all the many dear ones at home a merry Christmas. How many loving messages I would like to send you, each and every one. . . . But instead of trying to do anything so impossible, I shall give you the Samoan greeting, than which nothing can be sweeter or more graceful; I shall say *Talofa*, which is, 'My love to you.'

Vailima, Sunday, November 15, 1891.

WE have had at least one important day—to us—since I last wrote: we celebrated the 13th November as Miss I——'s birthday. (I hope you have not forgotten that transaction?) Of course, as I carefully explained to Louis, he has now no right to expect any presents, but for the sake of *auld lang syne* I am giving him a bathroom, which he did not see his way to indulging in for the present. It will undoubtedly be a great comfort in this climate

Lou declares, however, that he is afraid Miss I—— may have a legal claim to it, and when this was told to her father, he begged us to have the building made as portable as possible, so that it might be easily sent to her! It is now being put up, and is a substantial wooden erection opening off the back verandah, with a tank or reservoir upon the roof. There is not, unfortunately, enough water in the dry season to permit of a large plunge-bath, but in the future this difficulty may be overcome, and even as it is it will be a great convenience and comfort.

The birthday itself was very pleasant. We had for dinner a most excellent little roast pig of our own rearing, with *miti*[1] sauce, and an iced cake with 'R. L. S.' on it, that took me back to far-away days in the long past, when such cakes were a great yearly event. I could not help wondering, too, what I should have thought if any one had told me on the *real* birthday that that mite and I could spend its forty-first anniversary together in a home of our own in one of the Pacific islands. How impossible it would have seemed, and yet here we are, surrounded by many of the comforts and luxuries of home, and very grateful for them all. Well, it is a good thing on the whole that we cannot foresee what will happen; for, as Lou puts it, half the worth of life is in its unexpectedness. . . . But to return to the birthday, Austin's contribution

[1] *Miti*, a relish composed of coconut and salt water, etc.

VAILIMA

to the general entertainment was reading aloud 'John Gilpin'; which he really did with such effect that I felt quite proud of my pupil. Cowper is introducing him to a number of new and strange ideas, such as snuff-boxes, snuffers, and such bygone fashions; and it is curious to me, and rather sad, to realise how many of the old familiar objects and customs of our youth have now passed away for ever. What was only just before our day seems like another world to a child of the youngest generation. This entertainment, however, was not quite our only social celebration of the day: we had asked the G——s to dinner, and though they could not come, Mr. G—— arrived in the evening with two gentlemen from New Zealand, and stayed till ten o'clock, when we were all dead tired and very sleepy, as we rarely sit up later than 9 P.M. It was a very pleasant evening, however, and I must give you one characteristic touch. Lloyd was describing his sensations when attacked by Samoan fever. 'You suddenly feel sick and giddy,' he said, 'and have a strong desire to sit down *on a box*.' That undesigned touch of *the box* supplies a strong bit of local colour, as we are still very badly off for chairs! A cabinet-maker in Apia has been busy—or ought to have been busy—for many months making eighteen for us out of our own wood, after a charming old-fashioned model supplied by Fanny; but we seem no nearer to getting the chairs, in spite of

repeated objurgations, and have not even succeeded in making him return the model.

Talking of 'local colour,' I wish you could look in upon us at breakfast; it always strikes me as a typical South Sea scene, and so unlike what you are used to at home. We have both the doors to front and back wide open at that meal, as Louis does not join us at it, and we are not afraid of the draught when he is not there; so we can not only superintend the kitchen operations from the back door, but Lloyd, by turning his head in the other direction, overlooks the boys working on the lawn, and calls out to them when he sees any idling. Faüma waits on us at table, and Talolo does the cooking, while Pulu, his assistant, skips across from the kitchen every few minutes with a plate of fresh hot cakes, clearing the steps of the verandah at a bound, and handing over his dish to Faüma, who brings it in to us. They look very nice and neat in their *lava-lavas*, with fresh flowers always beautifully arranged in their hair; but you will be amused to hear that Faüma is at present wearing as an upper garment an old Shetland vest that has travelled hither all the way from Edinburgh. She finds the mornings cold just now, though the thermometer, if it does not rise above 82°, never falls below 74°; and then, no doubt, the 'woolly,' if rather incongruous, seems to her not only comfortable, but smart. The effect, however, is odd.

Sunday, November 22.

INFLUENZA has been very bad in Apia, almost every one has had it, and there have been many deaths; so, as you may imagine, none of us have gone down so long as we could avoid it. On Tuesday, however, Louis was obliged to go upon important business, and he came home quite upset and distressed at what he had seen. He said the people were going about like the ghosts of what they had been, and a gloom seemed to lie over the whole place. No one could think or speak of anything else. The most cheerful answer he got from any one was, 'I haven't been as bad as most,' and the man who gave it looked so thin and ill that one wonders what the rest must have suffered. It was quite impossible to keep out of infection, and Lou was so afraid of bringing it home to us here, that he wanted to stay with Mr. H—— till he saw whether he himself had taken it or not. Of course, however, we would not hear of this, and I am thankful that as yet he shows no signs of illness, so we hope he has escaped. This has again postponed the unfortunate fancy ball, which was to have come off on Friday; now it is not to be held till the New Year, and indeed, as both the German and American men-of-war have left the bay to keep clear of infection, there would have been an overwhelming dearth of partners at present. What concerns me more

closely is that my long-looked-for visit to Malua is also impossible, as I hear influenza is exceedingly bad there, and as before it is over the rainy season will be upon us in full force. I am afraid it may be many months before I can make out the expedition. This is a disappointment, I confess.

We have been taking some photos lately; one large one of the whole party was done on the lawn, ourselves with our friends the G——s sitting in front, the house-servants behind us, and the outdoor boys on the steps of the verandah still further back. Zenobia, the Water Witch, and the Spanish Lady all wore their fancy dresses, and I hope to send you a copy some day, but the difficulty is to find time to print it with so much pressing and necessary work that must be done. Every one is busy just now with the cacao, as Fanny's plants are growing splendidly, and many are ready to be planted out. Lloyd has first of all to superintend the boys clearing space in the bush for them on the other side of the stream. Fortunately it is not so hard a job as it might be, as the weeds have scarcely any roots, and just need to be scraped off the ground; while most of the trees are left standing to give shade. When an alley or strip has been cleared sufficiently, holes are dug fifteen feet apart, and a basket with its plant placed in each; a coconut is planted at each end of the row to serve as a sort of guide-post. In this

manner—and you see it is a fairly lengthy business—eighty-three cacaos have already been set out, and a good many more are waiting their turn; while as fast as baskets can be made, new seeds are being started. Lloyd has fallen on a plan that makes the boys work very well and willingly; he calculated the average number of baskets they made in an afternoon, and then told them he would give a cent extra for every one above that number. The result is a great rivalry as to who can turn out most; and yesterday two of the boys made twenty-five extra baskets each, and were extremely proud of themselves. (By the way, they seldom *take* money that is due them, but leave it standing, so to speak, to their credit; which is not surprising, as they have no way of keeping money, no pocket even to put it in, and if they went down to Apia, would be expected to spend or divide it all amongst their relations.) When a sufficient number of baskets has been got ready, a cart filled with earth is wheeled up to the back verandah, the boys bring up the baskets, and Lloyd and Austin fill them as fast as possible, and hand them back to be carried to Fanny, who sees them properly placed upon the verandah. The spare space of the lower verandah is already nearly filled up, and soon the baskets will have to be carried to the upper one. The planting of the seeds is done by Fanny herself; and then, in a wonderfully short

time, as it seems to me, first one pair of leaves unfold themselves, and then a second pair shoot out above, and the cacao is ready to be planted out. It all means a great deal of labour, and Fanny has no time for anything else. She and Louis went to one of the German plantations this week to beg for more seeds, and she has been promised another two thousand. I begin to wonder where there will be room left for us; I declare the place is no longer a civilised house, but a ranch, and am unkind enough to quote a description I once read that said a ranch was 'a place where you find broken-down wagons and rotten fencing and uncomfortable houses, because every one is too busy to do anything!' We certainly have not come to that, but I cling to our English maid Mary, and find great comfort in the fact that she can't be set to plant cacao!

Saturday, November 28.

THE mail is expected to-day or to-morrow, so I must bring my journal up to date or I shall get into arrears. I am glad to say that the influenza seems to be over now, and as most of us have been down to Apia and are still well, I think Vailima will escape its visitation, for which we are all most deeply thankful. Bad as it can be at home, I doubt if you realise what a scourge it is in the South Seas, and how real a danger, especially amongst the natives. I scarcely know what we should have done, had it broken out

amongst them just now; there is so much necessary work on hand, not to speak of getting in all our stores for the rainy season. It was amusing to see the horses arrive with the last load; one had an enormous air-tight case filled with groceries on one side, an equally large wooden box slung on the other, and a bonnet-box dangling below. I wonder the animal was not frightened out of its wits, or hopelessly insulted, by such a load on such a road! We have already had two very bad thunderstorms with tremendous rain, but neither lasted for more than half a day, and I am told 'this is nothing.' But I am quite sure that if anything of the kind is to be continuous, we shall be practically unable to venture out of the house. Personally I do not mind, as I have plenty to do; and my little pupil takes up a good deal of my time. At present he is learning 'Young Lochinvar,' and is deep in the delightful days of chivalry, going about in a helmet made out of an old straw hat, a cotton 'coat-of-mail,' with a wooden lance and a pasteboard shield. It is odd to think of the difference between the world that he imagines and the one he actually lives in—this part of it, I mean.

December 5.

A YEAR to-day since I left London; it does seem a long time to look back upon, so long since I have seen you all, and so much seen

and done in its passing. I do wish, constantly, that we were not so far from the old home, but yet I may truly say, 'the lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places.' . . . But I must finish off my letter, as they are to go down to Apia to-morrow, though the steamer does not actually start for, I think, three days yet. Already, however, the weather has to be taken into account. Last Sunday I started for Apia in the afternoon and got there dry, but unluckily the rain came on very heavily some time before the hour of service. Mr. H—— from Savaii, who is doing duty just now, went to church to see 'if there was any congregation,' and came back presently to tell us that *one man* had put in an appearance, but said that it was too wet to stay! It does not appear, from this, as if there would be much church-going during the rainy season, does it? I enjoyed my visit, however, and returned on Monday all the better for the outing. Here we are busier than ever with cacao-planting, as a lot of seeds arrived unexpectedly on Friday, with a promise of more to follow next day. All hands were at once set to work: cooks from the kitchen, laundresses from their washhouse, even Louis from his writing! till Mary and I were the only two unemployed. It was a very busy scene, some making baskets, some carrying in boxes of earth, some filling the baskets and planting the seeds; and on account of the rain it had all to be done under cover of

the verandah. The pit from which the earth was taken was covered over with a tarpaulin to keep it tolerably dry; but it was wet enough, in spite of this, to make a horrible mess of everything and every one. All yesterday the work went on, and the present 'burst' will be finished to-day, but I fancy more seeds are still expected. I think 250 plants have been set out already, and there are more than 2000 on the verandahs in different stages of growth, so you can realise something of the labour; we have hired a whole village, about halfway to Apia, to make baskets at one cent apiece, with a Chili dollar and a tin of beef for carrying up each lot of five hundred baskets. The beef is a great treat, I believe, and is said to be much better than any that they can ordinarily buy.

The people here are now discovering that Louis writes, as the *Bottle-Imp* is coming out in the native paper, having been translated by Mr. C——. It is much appreciated, but leads to some curious results; for instance, the house described in it somewhat resembles ours, and a good many of the natives suspect that Mr. Stevenson has the 'bottle' himself. Again, when Mr. C—— got in the list of subscriptions for the May-meeting, he was surprised to find a half-dollar entered to the name of the heroine of the story, and on making inquiries he found it was borne by a baby of the mature age of six weeks, who had been called after Lou's heroine!

And by the bye, I must not forget to add that we much enjoyed Mr. L——'s reminiscences, quoted in your letter. Louis remembers meeting him very well, and remembers, too, his opinion of his, Louis's, engineering powers; Mr. L—— observed that if Lou ever built a bridge, *he* would not be the first person to walk across it! . . .

Vailima, December 13, 1891.

IT is seven weeks to-day since I was at church, and seems likely to be as many more before I go again; and yet every one tells me that it is only 'broken weather' as yet, and though it might seem decidedly wet at home, it is not the rainy season nor anything like it. Well, you are likely to get very dull letters if I have nothing but rain to chronicle.

On Thursday last the whole 'family' was invited to dine with Mr. M——, whose mother and sister are here just now on a visit. The others went; but as I have given up going out to dinner, I stayed contentedly at home and much enjoyed my roast mutton, *taro*, and squash, with rice and cream to follow. It recalled old days to find myself indulging in the thick cream on the top, instead of conscientiously mixing it all together, as I do when others are to share in it. This was always one of the special 'treats' when Lou and I dined alone together, long ago, and were, as he used to say,

'our own party.' I tried to imagine him sitting beside me, as he did then; but the surroundings were rather incongruous, and save for the fear of hurting their feelings, I could well have dispensed with dining in state, with both Faüma and Lauilo waiting upon me. I sat up to see the others come home, and found they had enjoyed themselves immensely; Mr. M——'s eldest daughter, who has been at school in San Francisco, danced and recited, and Austin, evidently feeling that the credit of Vailima must be upheld, volunteered to recite too, and surprised his family by giving a passage from the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* with great spirit. There was some general dancing to wind up; and I must not forget to add that Louis, who had spent the day since he left home about 10 A.M. in paying calls, not only went to the dinner-party and was in capital spirits, but actually joined in the dancing! Now, isn't that a very different person from the Louis that you have been recently acquainted with? He did not return home, however, with the rest; after so tiring a day, he and Fanny thought it wiser to stay for the night at our 'town house.' And thereby hangs a tale.

I do not fancy I told you that Mr. H—— recently moved to a very nice house in Apia, close to the sea, where I went with Mrs. C—— to call on him lately, and was treated to beer by the hospitable Abdul. We admired, and rather

envied, the large and really beautiful rooms: all the more that Louis had once thought of buying this very house, but had given up the idea on account of its situation in the low and airless quarter of Apia. There is no doubt that Vailima is much more healthy. Well, Mr. H—— was hurriedly called away to Sydney last Tuesday, and he sent us up a very kind message, putting both Abdul and his house at our service while he was away; and that very night Louis and Fanny were glad to take advantage of his offer, and most comfortable they were. We quite feel as if we had grown in importance, now that we have (temporarily) a 'town house'!

Mary and I are still hard at work doing the books, about which business I already told you, I think. It is a long and wearisome process, and we are both very tired of it; but now that the table-work has been entirely given over to Faüma and the pantry-boy, Lauilo, Mary is entirely attached to me and is wholly at my orders. Thus we get much more done than when she had other duties, and I hope we shall soon be 'through.' It is really a very necessary piece of work, and Louis is very glad to have it done for him; but there is no doubt we are greatly in his way, and one day he proposed to *bribe* us to leave him alone! When I said we were nearly finished, he remarked, 'Then I 'll keep my money for something more pressing,'

and I am still wondering how much he would have offered us in his desire for peace!

I have long looked on literature as a contagious disease, at least so far as intention goes. Its latest victim here is little Austin, who was in bed with a chill one day, and passed his time in writing a story. In the evening he read us several chapters, which of course were greatly cribbed from his favourite books, *Tom Sawyer* in particular; but it was wonderful how it was put together, and amusing to hear him frankly explain where the different 'bits' came from. One of his heroes he described as 'handsome, but mean-looking,' and when we demurred, he announced triumphantly, 'Oh, but he *is*, just look at him and see!' It was intended for a 'portrait from life,' and as you can imagine, the original felt duly flattered. . . .

December 22.

IN spite of the weather, which was threatening and showery, I got down to Apia last Sunday and went to church with Lou, who was staying at the 'town house' for a couple of days' change and rest. Then I hurried back, to make the most of his absence, and finish the books. Mary and I have been at work from morning till night, and I have put everything else aside, so as to get through by Christmas Day. Then I shall be glad of a rest! And then, too, I shall have time to write, which just now I have not.

December 28.

ANOTHER Christmas has come and gone, bringing with it as usual many sad and many happy memories. How much lies behind us as we grow older; and as Lou always replies to any such trite remark, how much may still lie gloriously ahead! I thought of you all, and sent many loving wishes flying across the seas to each and every one of you. I had a quiet day at home and plenty of time to think, which I enjoyed; all the rest went, as had been arranged, to dine with the M——s, but as the weather was very unsettled and I was rather tired and done-up, I did not care to run the risk of a ducking. I had the house delightfully quiet and to myself, as most of the servants got a holiday; and as I only decided against going to Apia at the last moment, I had a festive Christmas banquet of sardines and bread and butter, and drank your health in . . . brandy and water!

The party, however, was a great success. Our contribution to the feast was a pig, four ducks, and three dozen eggs, which are very scarce in Apia just now; four quarts of fresh milk, and a great basket of vegetables, while Talolo and Lauilo went to help in serving and waiting. After dinner one of the ladies recited Lou's 'Christmas at Sea,' and two Samoan girls danced a very curious and graceful dance with clubs and shields, and finally there was general

dancing and supper. Lou enjoyed himself very much, slept at the 'town house,' and came home next day not a bit tired. They all declared it had been 'quite Christmassy,' and I am sure I ought to feel it so too, for I got many presents; even Talolo gave me a piece of *tapa*, a large basket, and an ebony and silver ring; and Faüma and Lafaële gave me another piece of *tapa*, and some beautifully woven small baskets, which I hope some day to show you.

On the day before Christmas, Fanny, who was in Apia, sent us a Cassandra-like warning that '*something was brewing*,' and we were to put up all the storm-shutters, or at least have them ready to put up at a moment's notice. We were prepared for the worst, but so far the storm has never turned up. After so many threatenings, I almost begin to disbelieve in the rainy season, or at least to doubt it being so black as it is painted; but the constant expectation is annoying, and hangs over me. Yesterday, for instance, the unfortunate fancy ball was *at last* to come off; and Belle started for it, accompanied by Louis, who actually made up his mind to go too! What think you of that? He returned, however, to dinner, telling us that a hurricane was expected during the night, and he did not care to run the risk of being storm-stayed in Apia. So once more we prepared ourselves for a tempest, and once more nothing but rain—though I grant it was very heavy rain—arrived.

I don't think, however, that we are out of the wood yet; it is afternoon, and Belle has not been able to make her way home, the thermometer has fallen very low, and the wind is steadily rising. We have all our shutters up, and I am using the extra door into the pantry, but I have a sneaking conviction that once more it is going to come to nothing.

New Year's Day, 1892.

A HAPPY New Year to all of you, and many of them, my dears. . . .

After all, we did get our first attempt at a gale, though it never rose to the dignity of a 'hurricane.' Exactly at 3.10 P.M. yesterday I heard a great noise, and rushing to the window I saw all the trees lashing themselves into a tremendous agitation, and branches snapping and crashing off and flying in all directions. Presently a large tree fell with a roar that reminded me of surf dashing over rocks, and a little later another came down as suddenly; it gave one a strange sense of littleness and impotence. A third threatened to give way, and if it had, would have destroyed the cookhouse, so the boys had to be sent out to cut it down; and later, when it grew too dark to see, there were many more. Yet Fanny says the wind was not nearly so high as it was last February, when it did less damage; we fear that it is the result of clearing the bush and giving the wind

'room to blow in,' and that in a really bad storm we may lose all our splendid big trees that we are so proud of. That would be a serious loss indeed. This morning the lawn and verandah were covered with broken branches, large and small, and the tanks were all running over, and the water lying in pools in all directions; but there is at least one thing satisfactory, and that is the way in which the house stood the storm. It never even shook, and felt as firm as a rock, and as no rain came in anywhere, we think it may be considered really weather-proof. Probably the worst of the storm is over now, as the barometer is beginning to rise; we have ventured to take off the front shutters, as they make the rooms so dark and gloomy when they are up, but there is no saying when Belle may be able to get home from Apia. The road, I believe, is quite blocked with fallen branches, and we must send boys to clear it before a horse can pass.

January 4.

THE road was cleared by Saturday, and Belle arrived in great joy to get back at last. She had enjoyed the ball immensely, and says the dresses were wonderfully pretty; and really we are quite glad it has gone off well, after so many delays and difficulties of all sorts. But I doubt very much whether such gaieties are very practicable here at this season of the year!

Vailima, Samoa, January 13, 1892.

AFTER the storm, and for the whole of last week, we have had weather so beautiful that I cannot help remarking on it; the rains made everything look fresh and green, and the colours of sea and sky and foliage were almost dazzlingly brilliant. I do not think that in the eight months I have been here I have been conscious of such sheer delight in the beauty about me; and if a storm is always followed by this wonderful loveliness of new life upbursting, it is well worth all the trouble and discomfort. I was even able to get down to Apia on Sunday, to the first *morning* service in English ever held here; and though the road is certainly bad, I got over it much better than I expected. All the surface soil has been carried away by the rains, leaving a track that is practically a very broken watercourse; but this only goes as far as Tanugamanono, the 'halfway village,' and from thence to Apia there is an excellent road, recently remade and kept up by the municipal authorities. When I get as far as that, all my troubles are over; but horses here don't seem to care what they are asked to walk on, which is one comfort—under the circumstances.

On Saturday we were quite gay in a small way, a 'rainy-season way' as somebody suggested. We had a Samoan chief called Mamea

to lunch, a fine, powerfully built, handsome man, who speaks English perfectly, and also reminded us a good deal of our old friend Kalakaua. We all liked him, and we had plenty of time to get 'weel acquent,' as, though invited for eleven, he arrived at 9 A.M., and stayed till three in the afternoon! Our other guest, a native lady, Mrs. H——, was more conventional, and did not appear till eleven o'clock. We gave them chocolate before they left, which they greatly enjoyed; and Mamea awoke to a new and enthusiastic interest in Fanny's cacao plantations, which he had just visited, in consequence. After they were gone, we had quite a succession of callers, which was very pleasant in itself, but had a sad result; Louis, who was already rather tired by two long and busy days in Apia during the week, was thoroughly overdone, and has not been downstairs since. He is better again, but still a prisoner, as Fanny and some of the others have slight colds, and he must be kept out of the way of possible infection; it is vexing, for he has been so well and vigorous lately, and able for so much. He started evening classes for any of the 'household boys' who cared to attend; he had only two pupils to begin with, Lafaële, who is rather slow, and Lauilo, the pantry-boy, who is surprisingly clever, and already reads English wonderfully well. Lou had chosen the *Arabian Nights Entertainments* for his lesson-book, and got so deeply interested in the 'Forty

Thieves,' that I really do not know which of them enjoyed it most.

Fanny has been very hard at work, this time in her coffee plantation, superintending the weeding, and the planting out of a lot of young trees that have been maturing in a nursery. There are more than 300, or will be, when they are all out; and as there are 1575 cacaos planted now, you see the ranch is really progressing. It means a great deal of work in the way of overseeing, however, and a constant risk of duckings in the sudden *plumps* of heavy rain. I, too, have an out-of-doors occupation now, which fills up my afternoons—weeding. There is a certain weed here, called *lantana*, that is dreadfully troublesome if once allowed to get the upper hand; it grows to a fair size, and has a pretty red and yellow flower—indeed, it is an admired garden plant at home, but here it increases at a fearful rate, spreading itself by its seeds, winged like our own dandelion. Ever since I came I have kept the lawn and avenue and the paddock tolerably free of it, but lately I discovered that the 'Hunter's Rest' part of the grounds was terribly overrun, so I set to work to try and get it clear before the worst of the rains come on. I weed for about two hours every afternoon, beginning about three, when the greatest heat of the sun is past; but it is still hot enough, in all conscience. It is pretty hard

work, as the older plants are very firmly rooted in the ground, and have to be dug up with a trowel; the seeds are in a kind of pod, and escape so easily that it is not safe to leave any lying about, so every one has to be brought home and burned. I wish you could see the condition I came back in—literally drenched with perspiration; but I really think it does me good, and I eat and sleep better after it.

Our Samoan boys have lately taken to playing cricket after their work is done, and are most enthusiastic over it. They have only sticks for bats and oranges for balls! but it is amazing how well they play; of course, they are already very skilful at many ball games, and I have often watched them throwing one so high that it went quite out of sight, and never failing to catch it. But this cricket pleases them immensely, and there is a great deal of laughter, talking, and cheering over it; we quite enjoy the fun as we sit on the verandah after dinner. They are all very good-natured and happy together; in the evenings they sit in a sort of shed, which was originally the cookhouse of the cottage that Louis and Fanny were living in when I paid my first flying visit here. Here they talk and sing songs till quite late at night. I have seen their light burning as late as eleven o'clock, and one of our boys is quite a celebrated 'improvisatore,' I am told, and much thought of amongst the Samoans.

January 18.

I GRIEVE to say Lou did not escape the cold after all, even by isolating himself in his own room. For a day or two he was very feverish and ill, and we were afraid it was going to turn out the dreaded influenza. You can imagine how thankfully I add that to-day he feels a good deal better, and we hope it is going to pass off. He has been so well and full of energy lately, so thoroughly able to enjoy his life and work, that we feel very sorry and vexed about this 'throw-back.' It fills my thoughts to the exclusion of all else.

January 25.

HE is still far from well, and his cough is troublesome. I do not think he will get rid of it without a sea trip to strengthen and refresh him. Unfortunately there have been rearrangements in the steamer service, which, though very convenient for passengers from San Francisco, make it no longer possible to manage the run to Tonga by the one boat, returning by the next, which used to meet it there; this was such a nice little trip, and could be done so comfortably. Now the only possible thing is to go to Honolulu, and return by the next boat—a much less enjoyable and much more expensive expedition; but if he is not better before the next steamer leaves, he must

certainly go. Sea air sets him up quicker than anything else.

It is evident, however, that I need not complain too much of influenza, as by the telegraphic details in the newspaper it seems to be dreadful everywhere, a scourge throughout the world. It makes me very uneasy, and terribly anxious lest I may hear of gaps in our dear home circle of friends.

I don't think I have told you all our preparations for the rainy season yet. For instance, I am sure I did not do justice to the nice fat cosy appearance of my piano, in its new suit. I had sent to Sydney for a waterproof cover for it, but it was so long in coming that we thought the order had gone astray; and, afraid to leave it wholly unprotected, we bought some woollen travelling-rugs, and made it a warm and well-fitting garment. No sooner was this finished than the despaired-of waterproof 'coat' arrived; but it was fortunately large enough to go over the other, so the piano now rejoices in a most elegant mauvy-grey frock, and a cosy flannel petticoat beneath. We hope that this will be sufficient clothing to keep off even Samoan damp.

By the way, the damp is not the only enemy of books here, nor the only evil that our system of 'varnishing' protects them against. It is a rather lengthy process, I confess, but if it succeeds as well as we hope, will be worth all

the trouble. The first day the outside is done, and the volume is set up half-open to dry thoroughly; the second day, we go over with a small brush all the leather corners, edges, etc., inside; and on the third it can be returned to its shelf, which has meanwhile been well scrubbed and sprinkled with borax, to keep off the cock-roaches—a terrible plague amongst books here. Another horrid creature is a long black fly—I forget his name—that builds a clay nest right on the top of the books from board to board; and they manufacture such a very strong gum to stick the clay on with, that it is almost impossible to get it off again, or to make the place clean. A third trouble is the 'borer,' a sort of mail-clad fly that no sooner gets inside a volume than he bores a hole right through the pages from beginning to end as neatly as if it had been done with an awl. No, the damp is not the only difficulty of a 'bookish' sort here, though perhaps it is the most important. Nevertheless, I like the idea of your rejoicing over the climate of Scotland in comparison with ours! Let me remind you that your climate consists of 'ten months of winter and two of bad weather'; that your summer is 'three hot days and a thunderstorm'—(and very lucky you think yourselves, too, to have three fine days in succession—*I* remember!)—while ours, here, is arranged after a wholly different pattern. We have six months with practically no rain at all,

three months with heavy occasional showers, and I was led to believe that the remaining three months were made up of almost constant rain, during January, February, and March; but as we are at the end of January already, and have scarcely had a single thoroughly wet day yet, I begin to feel as if the climate of Samoa had been maligned. Moreover, the many fine days in this 'hurricane month' have been, I think, more markedly beautiful than in any other season. As to the wind, too; think of the number of pettifogging, but most uncomfortable, storms that you have, whereas we have only had one since I arrived in May. It is quite excusable that when it *does* come, the wind certainly blows with a will! . . . Lou desires me, moreover, to add that you, at home, would need to varnish your books too, if you did not keep more or less constant fires in your houses; and that if building at home was carried out as it has to be done here, you would have to take quite as many precautions as we do to keep your houses from being blown away!!

January 31.

LOU is better—I need not say how much to our relief; but we are not quite free of trouble, for our horses are down with a sort of epidemic that appears to be prevalent amongst them just now. Several people have had heavy losses in this way; and this morning Lloyd's

beast, Macfarlane, died suddenly after only a day or two's illness. He was the best we had, so it is very annoying; and Harold (Fanny's horse) is still very ill, though there is a chance that he may pull through. We are really anxious about him; in a place like this one is so dependent on riding, and the animals are not easy always to replace. It is a small matter, indeed, compared to Lou's having a cold, but a worry nevertheless.

Vailima, February 6, 1892.

DECIDEDLY I must repeat that the climate of Samoa has been maligned. This is again a lovely day, and now that we are nearly half through the 'rainy,' I can find nothing in it to complain of. It is true that the rain, when it does fall, is heavy, and it is not very pleasant to be caught in a shower; but the effect is so wonderful on all this wonderful vegetation, that when you find yourself, as soon as it is over, in the midst of such exhilarating warmth and beauty, surrounded by what verily seems an outburst of fruits and flowers, you feel that such loveliness would be cheaply purchased even at a much higher price. Just now, for instance, I am sitting on the verandah, dressed in a cotton *holaku*, and delighting in the balmy warmth about me; while you—yes, I cannot help wondering what particular kind of bad weather *you* are enjoying, and how many shawls

and fur cloaks you are wearing to keep the cold out!

We did not succeed in getting poor Harold, Fanny's horse, to pull through and recover. He was found dead yesterday, and now we are reduced to three steeds for riding purposes, or rather to two, as Peggie, the mare, has hurt her foot on the stony road, and cannot be used till she is better. The native horses wear no shoes, and are very apt to hurt their feet at this season, when the rain washes all the earth off the roads, and leaves them like very rough watercourses, wet or dry, as the case may be. Thus our 'stable' is reduced to Jack and Tin Jack, my circus horse, which will make us stay-at-home folk in spite of ourselves.

We had a curious visit the other day. Two gentlemen and a lady arrived on horseback to call. I happened to be the only person available at the moment, so I went to the dining-room, and found a particularly pleasant young man with a sweet-faced but delicate-looking wife, and another man with them. A card was given to me, but did me little good, as I had not my spectacles on; and I wondered very much who they could be. I had just gathered that they had lived three years in Samoa (principally in Savaii), when Louis and Fanny came in, and Lou seemed to know them well, and to be quite sorry that this was a 'good-bye' visit, as they were returning to America—to Utah. This led

the conversation to Salt Lake City, and I related my experiences there, in my short and flying visit. Something was then said about Mission work, and I began to wonder if they could be missionaries. But when I examined their attire, and found that the 'nice young man' wore tight trousers of a *brilliant* blue coming just below the knee, black canvas gaiters, and a striped flannel shirt with narrow bands at neck and wrists, I felt that the missionary theory would not 'hold water.' Nevertheless there was further talk of how they lived and ate with the natives, so as to acquire a greater influence over them; and so many unmistakable references to their work that at last it dawned upon me that these were *Mormon* missionaries. I confess it seemed very odd to me that they should be so like other people, and (save in attire) so very like our own men! After they were gone Lou told me that he saw I did not know who they were, and was on tenterhooks while I was speaking of Salt Lake City, lest I should say anything 'out of joint.' Most fortunately I did not utter a single word that could offend them, but I tremble to think of poor Lou's feelings if it had been otherwise! It appears that he met the 'nice young man,' whose name was Elder L——, in Apia, and had been much attracted by him; they had had a long talk about Mormonism, and for one wild moment I believed the Elder hoped he was going to make a convert of Louis! All that

he did get, however, was an invitation to Vailima; hence this visit, which we all quite enjoyed. Mr. L—— has promised to send us some Utah potatoes that weigh four pounds apiece—I hope he won't forget; we are all agog to see them, and Fanny's housewifely soul sees visions, I am sure, of marvellous 'potato dinners.'

February 7.

I HAVE still lovely weather to chronicle—are you not ashamed of your remarks on the Samoan climate now? Not only did I get down to Apia for church this morning, but on Thursday I started on a round of calls, not very interesting, either to you or to myself, perhaps; for one calls under difficulties here. For instance, the wife of the new German consul is Swiss, and only speaks French, which made intercourse difficult. Then, to reach the American consulate (at present occupied by the new American Land Commissioner), I had to go by boat round the point; the tide was very low, the boat was aground on rocks and banks several times in the bay, and when we got round the point I found I had to be carried quite a long way to shore by my boatman. However, I was glad I had gone; I found my hostess very homesick and lonely, and sorely regretting America. I asked her if she did not enjoy seeing all the strange new places she visited; if she had no spirit of adventure. 'Not the slightest,' was her

emphatic reply. It seems a pity that such chances should be given to one who does not appreciate them, and who would so much more gladly stay at home.

February 12.

I MUST tell you how my birthday was celebrated, while I remember it. I had been very careful to keep the date to myself, and imagined no one knew when it was; but it appears Belle had looked it up in my last year's diary. On Wednesday Lou came into my room and told me that Austin was to have a holiday next day; I was rather indignant, and asked 'Why?' but he would only say, 'By my dispensing power.' Next morning I awoke without the least remembrance that it was my birthday; but just as I finished dressing Lou came to wish me 'many happy returns,' and added, 'I suppose you understand the reason of the holiday *now*?' Later on I was informed that everybody was to dress for dinner in honour of the occasion, which I did, though I thought it rather a bother; but I was presently astonished to find that Mr. H—— had arrived, invited without my knowledge. We had a very pleasant little party, and I am sure you will want to know what the birthday banquet consisted of: oyster soup, roast mutton, potatoes and bread-fruit, pudding with lots of cream, a cake with sugar icing and my initials on it—I wonder when last I had such a

thing—*and* champagne. And yet people imagine, I believe, that we are 'roughing it' in far corners of the earth——!

After dinner, as we were sitting in the verandah, Austin came forward and recited the following verses, with great dignity and self-possession, bowing to the Land Commissioner and to me at the proper places—

'A while ago, when to your hands I came,
I tripped on commas, stumbled at a name,
Browsed like the sheep of some ungenerous breeder,
On that lean pasture country, a First Reader.

Since when, by you presented, early and late,
I sit and feast with all the good and great,
And pass the flagon round, and praise my lot,
With Burns and Byron, Addison and Scott.

Since when, a practised knight, fear laid aside,
Through verbal Alps unfaltering I ride,
With polysyllables prone a great practitioner,
And need not blush before a Land Commissioner!

For which good gifts they chose me (choosing right),
To grace with speech the ritual of the night,
Deliver *his* rough verse, with easy mien,
And make our bows before our Lady-Dean.'

At '*his rough verse*' Austin pointed to Lou, so you will guess who was responsible. Mr. H—— was delighted with it, and promptly recited a piece himself that he had learned when he was ten years old, and had never forgotten.

We wound up with a couple of rubbers of whist, and I felt that I had thoroughly enjoyed my birthday; though, by the way, I was rather

disgusted by both Lou and Mr. H—— declaring that women have no *grand climacteric*. What has G—— to say to that? I felt that such a statement was quite lowering to the occasion, which, as I pointed out, could not be anything but 'grand' to me, as I had never had a poem written specially for and to me before. I hope you observe that Louis put as many long words into the verses as he could, to give Austin the better opportunity to show off his powers!

February 14.

YESTERDAY we had a visit from Captain H——, who is the manager of the largest German plantation here. He went all over the cacao plantation, and was delighted with it, and thinks it will turn out splendidly. You must know that the usual way here is to clear away all the bush, and then plant the young cacaos, each with a 'shade-tree' beside it, that will grow faster than the cacao and shelter it from the violence of the sun. When Louis was told this he said at once, 'What is the use of cutting down the bush and then planting shade-trees? Why not just leave the bush and plant the cacaos *in it*?' This is what we have done, therefore, only clearing away the undergrowth, of which there is not much among the high trees. Of course this was a great saving, alike in time, labour, and expense, but as it was a new experiment we were glad to have the

approval of one who knows so much on the subject. Indeed, Captain H—— says that he would try the same plan himself, were it not that he is cramped by orders from headquarters. I fancy they are somewhat like the Medes and Persians, fond of 'the law which altereth not.'

I am rather glad, however, that the cacao-plants are no longer in possession of our verandahs. The plantation being quite a quarter of a mile from the house, it has been found more convenient to arrange a nursery for the young seedlings close by; the baskets are placed together, and covered over with banana leaves, till the young shoots are well above ground. You cannot imagine how much this plan adds to our comfort: the verandah looks so spacious, and gives such a sense of air and coolness now that it is unencumbered; while there is the satisfaction of knowing that the plants in no way suffer by their removal. I think, indeed, all our things are doing well. A great many new bread-fruit and coconut trees have been planted lately; the bread-fruit came from Vailele plantation, and are six or seven feet high. All the leaves were taken off before they were moved, and they are wrapped in a sort of petticoat of plaited banana leaves, which has a most comical effect; but they will not long need artificial clothing, as already I see little green buds appearing all over them. Since I came in May we have had two crops of Indian corn,

which is used green for cooking, and ripe for the hens; and amongst it grow a quantity of peanuts. I wonder if you know what these are like? The pea-plant creeps along the ground, and small yellow flowers come out along its shoots or stalks. These gradually turn down into the earth and develop into nuts; so that when they are ripe you pull up a stalk from the surface of the earth, and find a lot of the odd little nuts hanging from it.

February 22.

I RODE down to church last night. From Mr. C—— I heard very good news about Samoan affairs; it seems that a reconciliation is really to take place between Malietoa and Mataafa. The king has promised to receive Mataafa and to give him a place near himself; and what do you think that place, or position, is to be? He cannot, it seems, receive him as a *son*, because then he could take the king's name and have a right to the succession; so here comes in Samoan diplomacy, and he is to be received as a . . . daughter!! The grey-headed elderly man is to be accepted as a 'pure virgin,' and after being so accepted, he cannot marry without the consent of his (new) family. We are very much amused at the arrangement, but so long as peace is secured, I don't suppose the fiction will do any one any harm.

Saturday 27.

AS I have just had your letter, I hasten to answer your questions lest I forget them later. Surely, in telling you so much about our cacaos, I must have described the 'fruit' of the full-grown tree, from which both chocolate and cocoa are prepared? The seeds are in large pods very like gherkins, which grow out round the stem of the tree, much in the same way as the mummy-apples do. Of course you understand that we have nothing to do with the manufactured products, any more than the farmer who grows the corn undertakes to grind or bake it. But if the trees do well, when they are five years old they should bring in about two shillings a year each tree of profit after paying all expenses; from which you can perceive that a few plants are of no use at all, and that it is only by growing it on a large scale—by the thousand—that any reasonable income can be made from them. As to the *barbedine*, it is like a good-sized vegetable-marrow of an apple-green colour, turning yellowish as it ripens; but we have to gather them unripe and store them, to preserve them from the 'flying-foxes,' a beast of the bat tribe, but much larger, that is very destructive. And as regards our live stock, it may be said to flourish under difficulties. I regret to say that the cats are now as bad as the rats at stealing chickens, and I am afraid we shall have

to get rid of the pussies; the first brood of chicks for this season has just come out, but I do not know if we shall save any from their many enemies. We have never had more than two cows giving milk, and we use all they provide with great ease, without attempting to make butter. Lou bought a cow in November which was to calve in a fortnight; but I regret to say that that calf has not yet put in its appearance, and we begin to think it is a myth—such are the difficulties of a landowner here!

March 2.

ON Monday evening Louis took the chair at a public meeting of the white inhabitants in Apia, to consider the approaching revision of the Treaty. He had not done anything of the kind since the old 'Speculative' days, and we were rather afraid lest it might be too much for him; however, I am thankful to say, that although he was caught in a heavy shower going down and got soaked through, he came home last night tired, but not at all the worse for the exertion. There was one rather amusing circumstance that I must tell you about. At the beginning of the meeting a German trader who, rightly or wrongly, is said to be very fond of making mischief, stood up and objected to the chair being taken by 'a frivolous novelist.' At the end of the evening this same man stopped the person who was

beginning to propose a vote of thanks to the chairman, and insisted on doing it himself! . . .

We have had such a delightful new walk made by the side of the stream, now on one bank of it and now on the other, crossing and recrossing by means of six little rustic bridges. Sometimes the banks rise high on each side and nothing is to be seen but stream, and trees, and sky; and after the fifth bridge the trees fall back in a 'fairy circle,' where there are rustic seats and a table. Here I often sit with my book and work, for the shade and the sound of the water make it feel so reposeful and cool.

Vailima, March 6, 1892.

I THINK the sensation, or at any rate the novelty, of this past week has been a funeral in our own grounds. It came about this way.

Some time ago, when clearing a path a little distance behind the house, the boys came upon some human bones. Louis examined them, and found that they consisted of the entire skeleton of a man, with the addition of a second head; from which he drew some very interesting conclusions. You must know that just here, where our house stands, a great battle—or so the natives call it—was fought about eleven years ago; and Louis is convinced that these bones were once one of the warriors that fought here, that he had shot his enemy and was carrying

off his head in Samoan war-fashion, when in his turn he was shot down and killed. It seemed a strange little story to be told, or indicated, by a heap of bones lying hid and forgotten under the bush. Lou was touched by it, and felt as if we who live on the same spot owed at least a friendly burial to our unknown neighbour; so one day after lunch we betook ourselves, with Mr. H—— and one or two other friends, and all the boys, by a path that had been specially cleared through the wood. In a few minutes we reached the place, where a grave had been prepared, and the bones coffined and deposited in it; and Louis, standing at the head of the grave, told again how they had been found, and what he conjectured about them. He added that he could not bear to shut away this unknown brother into the earth without some sort of farewell; and so he had asked us all to come and bid him 'rest in peace.' Mr. S—— made a little speech also, though it was more concerned with Louis, and with all he had done, than with the poor bones we had come to bury; and after that the grave was filled in, and Lloyd fired seven shots across it from his revolver. We all said *Tófà*, farewell, as we turned away; and left our warrior deep in the heart of the greenwood where he fought and fell barely a dozen years ago. It was odd how strangely human that handful of bones seemed to us all, and how closely linked to us in life and death.

Another day we had invited some Samoan chiefs to lunch; Māmea and Folaù arrived, but Selu had been detained on business. They really came to confer with Louis about the road through Tanugamanono, the village that lies half-way between Vailima and Apia; the municipality is anxious to continue the road, but the villagers are very much set against it. The truth is, they have been foolish enough to plant bread-fruit trees just where the road must pass; and though the municipality are quite willing to pay for the trees they would need to cut down, the natives will not hear of it. At present we pass through the village by a track or path that winds in and out amongst the bread-fruit, and more than once I have had my hat knocked off by the branches, when there is nothing for it but to sit still and call for help. Even when it comes, my troubles are not wholly at an end; I must sign that I want my hat picked up, and then that the pony must be held while I succeed in tying it on my head again. You can imagine, therefore, that my sympathies are with the road-makers.

Well, these chiefs think that Louis may be able to persuade the villagers to see that the road would be for their own good, and they came to ask him to try his powers; and it was finally arranged that five of the principal men of Tanugamanono are to come here to-morrow at 3 P.M., and Lou is to give them a *tauma fatangaitiiti*, which being interpreted is 'a little

feast.' I wonder what will come of it. The three chiefs, Māmea, Folaù, and Selu, are to be present and assist at the discussion, and naturally we are all deeply interested, the more so as a better road would be an enormous boon to us.

March 8.

THE 'little feast'—I spare you the anything but little native term—has come and gone and passed off very pleasantly, though not quite without some hitches that bothered us a little. We only expected the men that had been invited, and prepared for a party of twelve; we ladies intended to keep modestly out of the way, and Fanny and Belle even started off for a ride. They had luckily not gone far when they met the 'party arriving,' and found that the Tanugamanono men were accompanied by their wives, and by one boy into the bargain; which not only meant six additional guests, but forced us all to stay and keep them company. On the top of this Captain H—— and a friend arrived to call, and of course were asked to join us and assist; so our party was exactly doubled. Lauilo had the ordering of everything, in native fashion, intrusted to him. The feast took place on the front verandah, the middle part of which was covered with plaited coconut and banana leaves; and on these were placed pieces of boiled salt beef, quantities of baked *taro* and potatoes, a

great many tinned meats, some opened for use, others ready in case of need, tins of fruit of various kinds, and piles of cabin biscuits, heaped here and there amongst the other eatables. There were a few knives for handing about to cut slices off the meats, and a few spoons for helping the preserved fruit—fingers did the rest.

When all had arrived, Louis presented some roots of *kava* to the principal chief present. If he had kept them it would have meant that he would prefer to take the *kava* home with him; but as he at once returned them to Lou, it meant that he would like to drink the *kava* with us, as a sign of friendship and confidence. Immediately a large bowl, standing on three feet, and filled with *kava* that had been previously prepared, was carried in and placed at the other end of the mats, or 'table,' opposite to where the chiefs sat; the *kava* itself is a yellowish muddy-looking fluid, and in the bowl there is a bunch of fibre from the bark of a tree that is used as a sort of strainer. You know, I dare say, that all over the South Seas it is a 'ceremonial drink,' and possesses a complicated etiquette of its own that it is very bad manners not to observe rigidly. In this case one of our boys presided at the bowl, with a 'talking-man' from the village at each side of him, to make sure that the *kava* was given to each in the proper order of precedence.

When all was arranged, another boy held a

carved coconut cup of large size to Tilalu (the dispenser), who lifted the bunch of fibre out of the bowl in his two hands, and squeezed the *kava* out of it into the cup till it was nearly full; the 'talking-man' called out the name of the head chief, and the cup was carried to him at the upper end of the verandah, to be emptied at a draught, and handed back. Again it was filled, and this time Tusitala was the name called out; and so it went on till the *kava* was finished. I knew there would not be enough to go round, since it had been prepared for only half the number of guests, and I confess I was rather hoping that it would give out before my turn came; I had already tasted it, and thought it more like Gregory's Mixture than anything else I could recall. To my horror, however, I heard Tamaitai Matua (which means *elderly high-born lady*) called out, and the cup was brought to me to partake of. As a matter of custom and courtesy it is necessary to drain the goblet to the dregs, so summoning all my courage I did my duty nobly, and was rewarded by finding that it was not nearly so bad as I had expected, and is really, I believe, both refreshing and wholesome. Lou's experience was the same as mine at first, and now he is quite fond of it.

When the *kava*-drinking was over, the eating began; and I see that I have forgotten to mention a real adornment to our 'table,' two heaps of very fine large prawns from our own stream,

while for wine we had unlimited coconuts. As we were eating, one of our boys sat on the grass in front of the verandah plaiting baskets of coconut leaves; we knew it was the custom to give each guest some food to take home with him, and had prepared extra pieces of salt beef for the purpose, but the size of those baskets perplexed me and occupied my thoughts. I was soon enlightened, however, as no sooner had we done eating than our lady guests rose, each seized a basket, and in an instant everything eatable on the table was swept into them, pieces of beef, *taro*, potatoes, tins half-empty, tins unopened, biscuits—everything in the shape of food disappeared from sight; a flight of locusts or a giant in a fairy-tale could not have been more thoroughgoing and expeditious! It was a curious scene, and the most uncivilised that I have yet seen in Samoa; though I noticed that only the small boy trotted over the leaves that had made our tablecloth to lift up the remains, while the women, with some dim sense of propriety, circled round the edge. Lauilo says they are 'bush folk,' and have no manners at all; he is very angry that the wives should have come uninvited, and begged Fanny not to think that 'all Samoans are like that.' Yet he allows that it is the custom here to carry away all food that is left, and that it is intended to show that the feast has been appreciated; while Captain H—— remarked that after all there was

nothing new under the sun, and they were only determined to carry away their 'twelve baskets of fragments.'

When the feast was over, Louis took the men to his room to have his talk with them; but I am sorry to say that he found them so greedy and unreasonable that I am afraid no good will come of it, and we must resign ourselves to doing without a better road for some time to come.

March 11.

THIS week a new interest is uppermost. I must explain, to begin with, that our nearest neighbour, now that the G——s have gone back to town, is a Mrs. W——, a Samoan lady married to an American, who took her to San Francisco, and had her educated there. She is really a clever, charming woman, and we are glad to see a good deal of her; and it happened one day when she was here that we discussed the way in which the white people in Apia hold themselves aloof from the Samoans and half-castes. There is no general society as in Hawaii and Tahiti. Mrs. W—— regretted this greatly, and said, 'How can we improve, if they do not mix with us and teach us?' and went on to suggest that Louis and Fanny should take the matter up, and see what they could do. After a great deal of talking it was agreed to form a club consisting entirely of Samoans and

half-castes, the Stevenson family being the only white people to be admitted. Of course the first step was to get a few of them together, in order to lay the plan before them, and see if they approved of it; so last night was fixed on, both because the moonlight made riding easier, and because it happened to be Fanny's birthday. Twenty-five ladies and gentlemen were invited, most of them being young; a few of the ladies were married to white men, and served to 'matronise' the rest, though the husbands were rigorously excluded on account of their (lack of) colour; so rigorously, indeed, that although one of them rode up with his wife because she was afraid to come so far alone, he was kept downstairs the whole evening, and not allowed to join the party.

We received them on the front verandah, which really looked very pretty; it was decorated with Chinese lanterns, had carpets spread here and there, and tables set with lamps and flowers. All the sofas and chairs in the house, I think, were brought out, and we just managed to seat the whole party. Our guests all looked nice, and were very well dressed, nearly all the women wearing pretty *holakus*; while the men especially pleased us, they were so much more gentlemanly than we had dared to expect. Louis 'opened the meeting' with an address in which he explained the proposal that was before them: the formation of a social club where we could all

meet together once a week for amusement and improvement. A room would be taken, fitted with seats and lamps, a piano hired, and the members invited to bring any instruments they could play upon; and no doubt further projects would be taken up once the thing was set agoing. One point he insisted upon: that there should be a President, who should have the power of instant dismissal in case of any misconduct.

A very nice young half-caste, C—— T——, replied, saying that this was the first time that any one had tried to do anything for the Samoans socially, and they were deeply grateful, and agreed heartily with all that was proposed. After a few more words as to the present pleasure and lasting benefit that it was hoped such a club might prove to them, we proceeded to appoint office-bearers, Fanny being chosen as President, C—— T—— as Secretary, and Mrs. W——, our neighbour and the original suggester of the idea, as Treasurer. The entrance-fee was fixed at five Chili dollars, or fifteen shillings, per man, and half the amount for the ladies; and the monthly subscription at one dollar, or three shillings, for the men, and half a dollar for the women. This, it was thought, would cover all necessary outlay; though some of our guests, so far from objecting, considered it was too little. Lloyd had already been to Apia to inquire about a room, and had found that he could get a nice large warehouse behind Mr. H——'s store, in a

quiet corner where they would not be disturbed by the whole population of Apia staring in at the windows. It was decided to engage this at once, and it was further settled that the first and opening meeting would take place on the 23rd instant. To-day I have heard that the name is to be the 'Royal Vine-ula Club,' *vine-ula* being the native name of a flower that they look on as emblematic of Apia, while the king, through Mrs. W——, has signified his approval of the project, and his permission to use the word 'Royal.' I believe, indeed, he is to be the Patron of the club, or to bear some similar title.

All this being settled, we had sandwiches and cakes and lemonade handed round, and a few delightful native songs were sung. About 10.30 they all went away; and you have no idea what a pretty sight it was to look on at the catching and saddling of more than a score of horses, and then at the merry cavalcade riding off in the brilliant moonlight. When they had gone, and the quiet night closed in upon us again, one felt something of that curious silence and stillness which falls over a house after a marriage.

March 24.

THE first meeting of the Vine-ula Club went off, I am told, most successfully. As the room was not yet ready, it was held in the house of the young secretary, C—— T——, which he

had decorated charmingly with flowers and lanterns. Belle gave them their first lesson in dancing the lancers, and they all enjoyed themselves so much that they did not break up till very late; in fact it was 'ayont the twal'' before our party got home. So it has started in a very promising way, and is likely to be even more popular when in full swing.

And now to answer your questions before the mail goes. Indeed, we have never lived off bananas, even for a day; as a matter of fact, we have not yet a large enough supply to make it possible. I have heard Louis say that, before I came, they occasionally dined off an Avocado pear,[1] which is a long-shaped fruit that is eaten in a savoury way with salt and pepper. Of course during the great storm, when Fanny and Lloyd were forced to take shelter in the stable, it was not possible to light a fire or do any cooking; but at the worst there were always cabin biscuits and other supplies that prevented them from being reduced to a diet of bananas—a starvation diet, indeed, considering the few that were to be had!

Further, as to whether my steed, Tin Jack, kneels down when I tell him, I can only answer as the man did when asked if he could play the fiddle: 'Faith, I don't know, for I have never tried!' . . .

[1] The alligator pear (*Persea gratissima*).

Vailima, April 3, 1892.

I WONDER if I told you of the domestic drama that was lately played in or about our kitchen. Its details are not known to me —which, perhaps, I need not regret; but it had to do with Talolo, our excellent cook, and the wife of Lafaële, our equally excellent 'house-steward.' Said wife left him, which, I regret to say, is not unusual here; and Talolo being mixed up in the affair, had to be sent away also. On 'high, moral grounds,' as Louis put it, we were exceedingly sorry; and I am afraid that on grounds less praiseworthy we were equally sorry for ourselves! Talolo, as a cook, was not easy to replace; and when we tried a youth, christened 'David Country' by his last master, because his native name was impossible to pronounce, we became even sorrier. David had learned too much of the horrible cookery that prevails on trading schooners to be teachable; and after a few days of hopeless failure, you can judge of our joy at hearing that Talolo and Lafaële had 'made it up,' and we were to get our good cook back again. I don't in the least know what understanding they have come to, but I dare say Lafaële is well rid of his wife, who will not return to him.

You must know that both Talolo and Lafaële are members of very good Samoan families—landed proprietors, in fact—which sometimes

leads to surprises. While Talolo was away, for instance, Belle met him at a picnic, most gorgeously arrayed in native chief style in *lava-lava*, and white shirt and wreaths of flowers, and with a following of retainers. Her breath was quite taken away by the spectacle, and she wondered that she had ever ventured to scold this imposing creature for not keeping his kitchen clean enough to please her! Moreover, both Talolo and Lafaële are members of the Vine-ula Club, and Belle is just now busily teaching them the mysteries of waltz and lancers, how to make bows, how to ask their partners to dance, and to lead them back to their seats, and I scarcely know what else. She is herself an enthusiast in dancing, and very good at it, and I think she quite enjoys teaching such apt pupils. The second meeting of the club was held last Wednesday, and was quite as successful as the first; Fanny's rheumatism unfortunately kept her at home, but Louis went, and enjoyed it as much as any one. He left home at noon, attended to business in town, and was still able to dance every dance, only returning home at midnight! He was certainly tired next day, but not a bit the worse for the exertion. This meeting, by the way, was held in a new house just built a little out of the town by a merchant in Apia. He does not need it at present, and has offered to lend it to the club; so that for the present they will not need to hire

a room. Once a month, when the moon suits, they will meet here, at Vailima; and at other times Mr. P——'s house near Apia will do very well. So far, I think the chief occupation has been the dancing; but Fanny and Mrs. W—— had both intended to read papers, and only Fanny's rheumatism had delayed the literary element till the next meeting.

April 7.

TO continue what I was saying, I must add that the third meeting went very well, and the papers were duly read and appreciated. Fanny's was to the effect that while amusement was wholesome for all, she hoped that the members of the Vine-ula Club would always so conduct themselves that it might be recognised not merely as a society for recreation, but a school of good manners. She, Louis, and Lloyd went, but Belle, having a bad headache, stayed at home; and one of the members of the club, desiring to say 'she was a great acquisition,' worded it rather quaintly by remarking that 'Mrs. Strong's presence was a *great improvement*'! Our party felt duly snubbed. . . .

To-day was Lloyd's birthday, and when he appeared in the morning the boys all came with wreaths and garlands which they twisted round his head, neck, and waist, till he was a truly edifying spectacle. Some of the green wreaths and some lovely yellow flowers were laid on the

lunch-table as a decoration; and we had a roast pig, which was high art in itself, a scarlet hibiscus blossom on its forehead, and two green garlands encircling its body. See how we celebrate our festivals in classic dignity!

April 14.

I HAVE not written for a week, because it has been so hot that I have felt hopelessly lazy and washed out. The heat is greater than usual at this time of year, and indeed it has been a most exceptional season altogether; no continuous rain, and not a single storm worth speaking of. In fact it has been so dry that the cacao nursery has had to be specially watered; and if this is so in the 'wet' season, what will it be in the dry?

Two more of our friends here are 'going home'; *she* for ill health, and *he* having got six months' leave to take care of her. That is one drawback here, that the society, such as it is, is always changing; one no sooner gets to like people than they go away, and with that in mind it is hard to make friends with those who replace them. However, no doubt it teaches us to value all the more those who do stay.

I went to Apia on Sunday, and stayed all day for both the services; and on Monday Mr. W—— rode up with me as far as the place where the girls' school is to be built, about halfway between Apia and Vailima. He took me all

over the grounds, and explained how and where the house would be erected, in a delightful spot, with a peep over Apia harbour, and the ships lying in the bay. The house is to be begun at once, and should be ready for occupation in July; while meantime there is much planting of bananas and bread-fruit going on, these being so important as a natural food-supply. Probably I shall have more to tell you of the school in time to come.

Last night the Vine-ula Club met here. It was a lovely moonlight night, and there was a full attendance; they enjoyed themselves greatly, and literally had to be *sent* away at 10.30! Belle's pupils do her great credit, I must say, for they already know the lancers, waltz, and schottische, and very well, too; while I own I was astonished to see Lloyd's performance, for in the old days at home no one could ever teach him to dance, however hard they tried. My dear Tom used to write amusing letters to Louis telling him of the (imaginary) accidents that were the results of these attempts; how on the nights when Lloyd took his lesson an ambulance was stationed outside the door of the class-room, and the hospital filled with his unfortunate partners, etc. etc.! But all that is changed now, and he dances with the best of them, and thoroughly enjoys it.

It is a rule of the club that any refreshments are to be of the simplest nature, so we only pro-

vided savoury tongue sandwiches and lemonade. They were handed round by our handsome Fijian boy, Thomas (more often corrupted into 'Massie'); and as he had got himself up in correct Fijian style, I think I must describe his attire. First he had on a dark-blue and white *lava-lava*, then a white shirt over it; and finally a broad, pale-blue sash tied round his waist, with the tails of the shirt hanging down below! The effect was striking, and his manners are most dignified; which is not surprising, as C—— T—— tells us he is a member of the royal family of Fiji! His wife, Helèna, is our precentor at prayers, and is also our washerwoman; and our boys' verdict concerning her is, that she is 'a very nice woman, but not so highly born' as most of our people! Louis says we 'll pull through, if that is the worst blot on our escutcheon.

April 16.

THIS has been an exciting day, and I must begin it with sad news; my poor, dear, patient horse Tin Jack was found dead this morning, and we are all greatly grieved. He was the gentlest, tamest creature that ever existed, and I am sure we shall never see his like again; to me it is almost like losing a dear friend. This is how it happened. About a fortnight ago we thought some of the boys had been riding the horses during the night, and to

prevent this they were taken out of their paddock, and tethered near the house. Fanny warned us that it was not safe to tether the circus-horse, as he was not accustomed to it; but we thought she was playing the part of Cassandra, and did not heed her. All went well for a while; till, alas! last night poor Tin Jack got his feet entangled in the rope and fell into the river, where he was found in the morning, quite dead. Lafaële, who has charge of the horses, was so horrified when he discovered him that he dared not tell us, and set off to walk across the island—anywhere to get away. After a time he thought better of it, and came back; and got Talolo to break the news to Fanny. It is a terrible loss in every way, as it leaves us without a single quiet or 'broken' horse, so I am afraid all my riding and churchgoing are at an end for the present. Indeed, I don't think I shall replace him, as before long I shall be starting homewards.

The day, however, was to hold further events, and pleasanter ones; no less than a visit from his royal highness, King Malietoa himself, accompanied by Mrs. W—— as interpreter, and attended by three soldiers, dressed in white coats and trousers (!) and armed with rifles and bayonets. The king also wore white, with long yellow leather leggings reaching above the knee; he is a pleasant-mannered, mild-looking elderly gentleman, and made himself most agreeable.

Of course his ignorance of English made our intercourse rather difficult, but Mrs. W—— was an excellent interpreter. We took the king all over the house, and showed him everything that we thought would interest him, and he was loud in praise of all. He ended by staying to lunch with us, and as it was a 'meat' day (we do not always have meat here; once or twice a week we confine ourselves to light dishes and savouries) we had a good lunch, which he evidently enjoyed. We also had *kava* made and brought in, and he drank it with Louis—a great sign of goodwill; and I really think that, like our chief Māmea, he would have stayed all day, had not Louis happened to say that he was going himself to Apia to meet the steamer, in case Rudyard Kipling should come by it. So the king went off at last, about two, and it was arranged that if Kipling did arrive, Louis was to take him to visit his majesty, who made us all a little speech before he left, telling us how much he had enjoyed our welcome to Vailima.

April 20.

THE Kiplings did not come, though they had booked their berths on the steamer; and Lou could not find out what had detained them, nor whether they intend to come by the next boat. He was glad, however, that he had gone down, as 'Max O'Rell' and his wife and two daughters came on shore, and had breakfast

with Louis and Fanny. They had intended to visit Vailima, but were glad to be saved the long ride on such a hot day; though I was sorry not to see them, as they were most pleasant people.

We have had another royal visit, from the queen. Mrs. W—— accompanied her also, and she had two men in attendance; but this time they were 'men of peace,' unarmed, and in the ordinary Samoan *lava-lava* and shirt. It was the first time in her life that the queen had ridden on horseback, so it was really a great undertaking for her; but she told us that the king had enjoyed his visit so much that he would not be satisfied till she too had been introduced to the beauties of Vailima. We took her over the house, and even into the pantries and storerooms, and she was greatly interested and impressed; she started with alarm at the stuffed head of Fanny's Californian lion, and was amazed that any one could ever walk about in her buffalo coat. She was a nice-looking woman of between thirty and forty, and was well dressed in a *holaku* of cream muslin trimmed with pretty lace. She brought a pressing invitation from the king for us all to go and lunch, in Samoan fashion; but Louis is so busy at present getting ready for the mail, that he could not fix a day that would suit him, and we are to settle that later.

April 22.

WE are dreadfully mixed up with royalties just now. I feel quite overcome by so much splendour! Another invitation has arrived, this time from Mataafa, who begs us to visit him and his court at Malié. You must know that although Malietoa is supported by the three protecting powers, the greater number of the Samoans are in favour of Mataafa, who is indubitably the abler man of the two, and (as many hold) the more rightful king. We believe that peace might easily have been made if the reigning king had been wisely advised; but the moment was allowed to pass, the opportunity lost, and now no one knows how it may end. I will send you a paper by this mail containing the report of a speech made by one of Mataafa's supporters, to show you what they are saying; and I think you will hear of a letter from Louis in the *Times* very soon. I don't attempt to write to you about politics, as I don't profess to understand them; and things change so continually from day to day that it is fairly bewildering to me. Louis, however, enjoys the constant excitement, and it keeps up and stimulates his interest in the place and the people, and I think is good for him in many ways. But to return to our invitations; the two kings are to be visited in the order of their arrival, the king in possession first, and 'Charlie ower the water' later, so that no one can accuse

us of favouring one or the other unduly. You see we must be careful when, even by reflection, we for a moment share in 'the fierce light that beats upon a throne'!

I must not forget to tell you the compliments that Malietoa paid to me; one at least Louis thought rather two-sided, as his majesty insisted that I looked 'very strong' to be the mother of 'such an old son'! Indeed, he went the length of saying I looked the younger of the two, which Lou was half inclined to resent!! till I suggested that it was 'considering my age,' which took the sting out of it. The king also greatly admired my cap, and I was amused to see that he recognised it at once as being 'like Queen Victoria's,' which shows that he notices things, doesn't it?

Vailima, May 1, 1892.

AS my last letter was so much concerned with royalty, I may as well begin this one by describing our visit to Malietoa, which came off on Thursday. About ten or eleven o'clock we set off for Apia, Louis, Fanny, Belle, and I, the others being too busy to spare a day for the expedition. The king lives in a very ordinary Samoan house, it being one of the habits of the present advisers of his majesty to spend all the revenue on fine houses and large salaries for themselves, and to do as little as may be for the nominal ruler. The 'Palace,'

therefore, is a long oval erection supported on wooden posts; a double row of trees in the interior reaching to the high roof, and a row round the outside only as high as the overhanging eaves. Between these outer posts hang what may be described as Venetian blinds made of coconut leaves, which can be raised or lowered at will. On the occasion of our visit they were kept down at the two ends of the house, where we might have been overlooked from outside; but at the two sides they were entirely drawn up, letting in ample light and a delicious current of air. The eaves, however, are so low, that we had to stoop a good deal to get in. There was very little furniture of any sort, save a large iron bed at one end, two washstands against the the wall, several wooden chests, and some lamps, etc., on shelves amid the rafters; but the floor was covered with fine mats, very thick and soft. Of course there were no chairs, and we had to sit on the floor; but I was close to the bed and leant against it, so that I did not find it too tiring for my elderly back!

The queen came out to meet us, but the king awaited us within, and welcomed us with great dignity; he was dressed in black trousers, white flannel shirt, black tie, and white shoes with stockings, these the first I have ever seen on any male Samoan. He talked to us through Mrs. W——, the interpreter, for a few minutes, till the *kava*-bowl was carried in by three pretty

girls dressed in skirts of *tapa*, with bright-coloured low bodices, and wreaths on their heads and round their necks. They came round and shook hands with us all, and then seated themselves behind the bowl at the far end of the room, and one of them began to strain the *kava* through the bunch of loose fibres that is always used for this purpose. After doing it two or three times, she tossed the bunch outside to some one waiting there to catch it, who shook it out thoroughly and threw it back again, and this was repeated several times. Then a 'talking-man,' dressed in dark blue, came in and took his place beside the bowl; he called out the king's name and title, and filling a cup by squeezing the *kava* from the fibres, he handed it to his majesty, who bowed to us and drank it off. Then followed a discussion as to which *Tamaitai* (high-born lady) should be helped first; our friend Mrs. W—— thought that Tusitala's wife should come before his mother, but the king preferred the old-fashioned and uncivilised custom of honouring old age, so the *Tamaitai matua* (elderly lady) was given the precedence, and the cup handed to me. Then it was taken to Tusitala, then to the queen, then to Mrs. W——, who acted as interpreter, then to Fanny, and finally to Belle. The girls, or maids-in-waiting, handed the cup to all but the king; the 'talking-man' only filling it and calling out the names for all the lesser folks.

The *kava*-drinking finished, we adjourned to another house about the same size close by, where the feast had been prepared. The king led me across, taking me by the arm, and seated me on his right hand, placing Fanny on his left, the 'table' being represented by banana-leaves spread on the floor. It was a most excellent and abundant meal; fine roast-pig with the invariable *miti* sauce, a great many ducks and chickens and pigeons, several kinds of fish and delicious shell-fish, baked yams and *taro* in heaps, and that very good *taro* pudding that I learned to like so much at Tautira.[1] We enjoyed it all, and ate as much as we could, and I think the king and queen only regretted there were not more of us; they had expected us to bring friends with us, as we had spoken of some arriving by the steamer, and certainly there was food enough for a much larger party. And if *we* did not seize on the remains of the feast to carry off with us, let me tell you that the queen did it for us! Moreover, when I saw her packing a beautifully made basket with two legs of the pig, two ducks, three chickens, some pigeons, yams, and *taro*, the *taro* shape, and several kinds of fruit, and despatching it ahead of us to Vailima by a boy, I felt there was something after all to be said for the Samoan way of 'giving a dinner-party'!

Louis was very anxious to have a quiet talk

[1] *From Saranac to the Marquesas.* Methuen and Co.

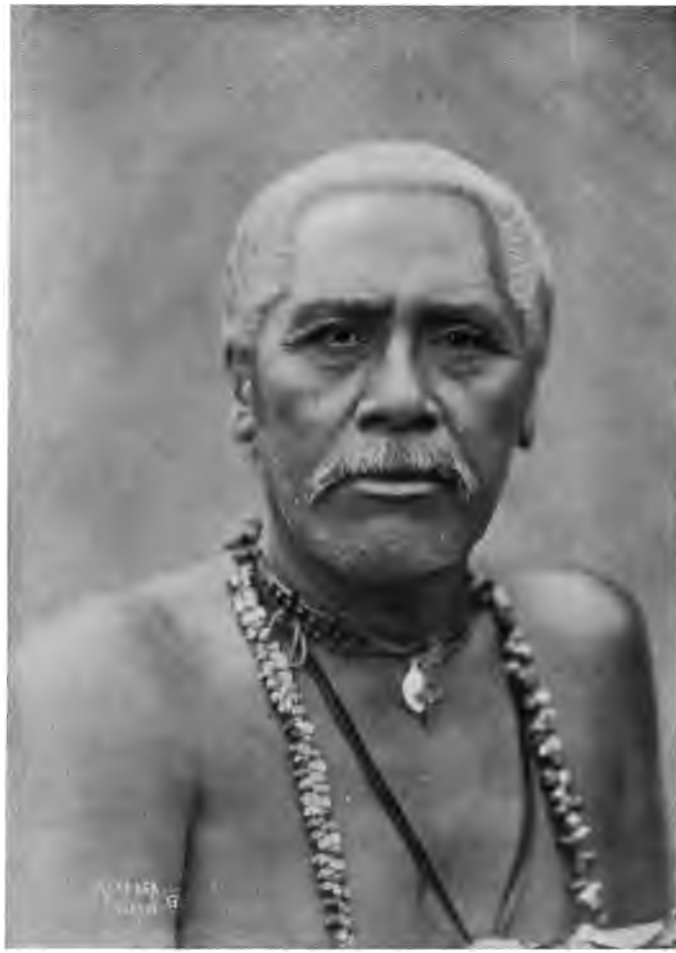
with the king to explain to him our proposed visit to Mataafa, and to point out to him the great benefit it would be to the country if the two claimants could come to some peaceful agreement together. He asked, through Mrs. W——, for an interview for this purpose; and his majesty at once arranged to meet him at Mrs. W——'s house at 8 A.M. yesterday morning. Louis of course went at the appointed hour, but found no one but Mr. ——, the missionary, who was to act as interpreter; after a considerable time the queen arrived with a message that a government meeting had been called, which the king was obliged to attend, but that he would come that evening at seven o'clock. Again Louis and Mr. —— were punctually on the spot, but—no king; they waited an hour and a half, but as he never appeared, we suppose that the 'Powers' would not allow him to come. Of course Louis can do no more, and now it remains to be seen whether anything better may result from his visit to Mataafa.

May 7.

LET me do the king—and even the 'Powers' —a tardy justice; it seems there was much government business on hand, and Malietoa had to receive some of the officials in the evening and provide the inevitable *kava*-drinking. Being a ceremonial of state, it cannot be omitted without offence; so he was not free till

nine o'clock, when he *did* start for Mrs. W——'s, but of course only got there to find Lou gone. It is vexing that she never sent us word, as Louis would have tried again to see him, if he had only known this.

The expedition to Mataafa's court at Malié went off very well. Louis, Fanny, and Belle started at 6 A.M. on horseback; Lou had to ride one of the cart-horses, and he was certainly a remarkable figure with a sort of bolster containing spare clothes across the saddle in front of him. It did not *look* like a suitable get-up for a ceremonious visit to even a dethroned monarch! However, at Apia they transferred themselves to a boat belonging to the Roman Catholic Mission, which took them to Malié, a pretty village close to the sea, which reminded Lou much of Tautira in Tahiti. There are some fine Samoan houses in it, and Mataafa lives in a very large and handsome one, with guards set about it, and many other signs of royalty. They tell me that he is a splendid-looking man, with much more intellect and force of character than Malietoa, and in fact they all lost their hearts to 'Charlie ower the water.' He welcomed them most heartily, and drank *kava* with them as soon as they arrived. The 'talking-man' was very old and indistinct, and Louis could not follow all that he said, but to give you some idea of his flights of oratory, he was not satisfied by describing Tusitala as 'the



MATA-AFA

chief of the three Powers,' but actually likened him to our Lord, because he had 'come to save them'!

After the *kava*-drinking a preparation of arrow-root was offered to them, and then, a curtain having been drawn across one end of the house, Mataafa suggested that they would like to rest for a while; which they were only too thankful to do, and fell asleep, they say, as soon as they lay down. When they awoke, the feast was ready, laid out on banana-leaves in the usual manner, and was most excellent. Lou told me that the king's people were evidently puzzled by Fanny and Belle, and apparently concluded that he had *two* wives; so in order to prevent any jealousy between them, they were helped simultaneously to *kava* in bowls exactly alike, and were throughout the feast put carefully on the same footing, given the same food, and served at the same moment! After that I must add the Samoan designation for a wife: the 'back of the house.' A modest honour truly—unless they mean the back-*bone*! Before leaving Louis was presented with two fowls, twenty *taro* roots, and a large root of *kava*, which we have since divided and planted; this is a sort of 'gift of honour,' as it is so much prized. The only drawback, in fact, to an otherwise delightful visit was the absence of a proper interpreter, which deeply disappointed Louis by preventing the talk about politics, for which he was so

anxious. They left about 6 P.M., and rowed back to Apia by a lovely moonlight, staying all night in town, and returning home next day.

May 15.

LOUIS has been again to Malié to have his longed-for political interview with Mataafa. This time he took C—— T—— with him as interpreter; and as it is not more than ten miles, they rode instead of going by water. It is, however, rather a troublesome journey, as every village erects stone barriers or walls across the path to keep their pigs from straying; there are eight of these between Vailima and Malié, and as they are fully three feet high, they form quite a respectable obstacle. Fortunately Louis was riding Fanny's young horse, which is a capital jumper, and was not a bit put out by a little extra exercise. They got a curious proof, however, of the uselessness of these elaborate barriers, as at one place they had to wait until a pig had finished climbing over, and though he was slow, he seemed to do it with much less effort than either a man or a horse!

The interview with Mataafa was interesting, and entirely satisfactory; he was fully alive to the importance of coming to a peaceful settlement of the Samoan difficulty, and was quite ready to meet with Malietoa and discuss things with him in a friendly way. He was also deeply

grateful to Louis for his desire to help him and his people to a lasting peace; and turning to his councillors, he called on them to look carefully at Tusitala's face, that they would be sure to remember him and never to forget that he had braved the elements and the chance of deportation from the island to do them a kindness. If ever, he added, they had a chance to do him a service, they were to do it at any cost to themselves. . . . It was indeed true that he had 'braved the elements,' for it began to rain heavily almost as soon as Louis left home, and he was soaked through long before he ever reached Malié. You can imagine how terribly anxious Fanny and I were; we made sure that he would be taken ill, and would not be able to come home. Can you realise, then, what we felt when back he came in the morning, tired certainly, but not a whit the worse! So much for the effects of the Samoan climate. . . .

Last week was quite a gay one with people calling and coming to lunch. When they come at eleven and stay till four, I think we may conclude that they enjoy themselves; and so do we, though it is a little tiring. On Wednesday evening Louis, Belle, and Lloyd went to the club meeting; it was as successful as ever, and was held this time at Moto-otua Gardens, a kind of country inn halfway between Vailima and Apia, which they had all to themselves, as no one goes there o' nights. Another event was the

departure of Mary, our English maid, who went back to New Zealand. She had been here for a year, and I think was sorry to leave us; but I did not wonder at her desire to go, as it was a very lonely life for her, and she could seldom get down to Apia. I shall miss her greatly, as she was really pleasant and nice in every way; and it was such a comfort to have one servant that understood what I said. Indeed our house servants have been rather a trouble of late. Lauilo, our clever pantry-boy, had to be sent away for disobedience and untruthfulness; and this was a source of real regret to us, as we had thought so well of him. We are now trying in his place one of the outside boys, Simé, whose health broke down lately and who is no longer fit for anything but light work, poor fellow, having had a severe attack of hæmorrhage from the lungs. He is willing and anxious to do his best, but awkward in the extreme and a terrible 'breaker.' Arick, the black boy, is the other table attendant; I wish you could see the pair, standing like statues at either end of the side-board, but ready to jump at the merest sign. Their dress varies according to the time of day, but at breakfast Simé is just now wearing a dark *lava-lava* with a long flannel nightgown of Lou's on the top of it; while Arick has a pink and white striped flannel jacket over his tight red 'petticoat'! I wonder, by the way, if you remember Lou's writing home to me that the

Butaritàri men carried a 'bunch of salad' in their ears? I never quite understood how that could be till I saw Arick; he has the outer edge of one ear slit and separated from the rest almost for the entire length, and it hangs down like a huge earring. He could carry quite a bundle of things in it if they were properly packed.

Besides these two, we have a young brother of Talolo's, at present taken on trial to see if anything can be made of him. He seems a bright nice boy, and as he does my room since Mary left, I am thankful to find him teachable. I only wish he could speak English. By the bye, when they do learn to do so, the natives are very funny over the genders of things. Lafaële came to Fanny one day and told her that her horse was going to have a *calf*; so, after a little lecture on grammar, she explained to him that a lady-horse was called a mare. Shortly after that two of our pigs had litters, and Lafaële and Helèna each begged to have one of the little ones for their very own. When Fanny agreed, Lafaële added, 'My pig a man-pig, more better give Helèna a *mare*-pig!' Still more lately he asked leave to go to Tonga to see his son. As he could not well be spared, Fanny suggested that the boy might come here; and presently Lafaële appeared with a girl about twelve. 'Who is that, Lafaële?' we inquired; and the answer was, 'Oh, that *my son*!'

You may imagine how civilised we are in

Samoa when I tell you that we have a strike going on just now. It began by the government and the merchants determining to banish Chile money from the Islands, and refusing to give a fair equivalent for the dollars that the natives had saved up by hard work. The result was that the work-people all struck to enforce their demand that American dollars shall be paid henceforth instead of Chilian ones; and that such money as they still have shall be exchanged at the same rate. I don't know how it will end. Louis was quite willing to pay our men extra, but they went off while he was at Malié, and left us thanking our stars that the cacao-planting is nearly over, so that we can get on without them. There are now 7766 cacao plants out, which is pretty well for a single season's work. By the way, the dear home flowers will not all do with us here. Mignonette is quite a failure, I am sorry to say; sunflowers do well, and perhaps balsams and zinnias best of all that you sent. Just now the Frangipani is delightfully sweet, and covered with bloom; and the Cape gooseberries are bearing well. They really make a very good substitute for the home fruit in tarts.

May 24.

I WENT to church on Sunday evening (the loss of my poor horse makes this a much rarer pleasure than it used to be), and next day went for a delightful ride with Mrs. C——

through the German coconut plantations. I rode Mr. C——'s horse, and it cantered like the wind; I felt as if I were fifteen again instead of being old enough to be a great-grandmother! Once when we were flying along full speed, Mrs. C—— in front and myself following, the thought came over me, what *would* they say at home if they could see me now! And your faces (in imagination) amused me so much that I laughed till I nearly fell off. As it was, my hat flew away and my hair came down, and I had to wait till Mrs. C—— dismounted and came to my help. It was a lovely day, and reminded me of Mentone. Lou says that here in the tropics the colouring is much more brilliant; but at any rate it matched, if not with the reality, at least with my sunny memories of the Riviera. I saw one strange atmospheric effect, by the bye. At one place Mrs. C—— said, 'Is not the sea beautiful from here?'

I looked, and looked again, and said, 'I don't see the sea, only a range of blue mountains.'

'There are no mountains,' she rejoined. 'You see nothing from here but the ocean.'

It was long before I could believe it; the effect was so distinctly that of being piled up to the very heavens, and the illusion of a distant range of mountains so convincing. When at last I began to believe it was only water, I still felt as if it were raised up, and must inevitably come pouring down and overwhelm the land. . . .

Vailima, June 1, 1892.

WEDNESDAY was club night, and Louis, Belle, and Lloyd went down to Apia for the meeting, and stayed at the hotel all night so as to be ready for the mail-steamer, which was expected to arrive early on Thursday. It had a menagerie on board, and Louis wanted to take all our people to see such a unique sight in the South Seas; it was, of course, a chance that may never occur again. So all were dressed in their best *lava-lavas* with wreaths of flowers and leaves, trousers and coats being strictly forbidden, and set out in quite an imposing procession soon after 7 A.M., leaving Fanny and me alone in our glory to look after ourselves for the day. Unfortunately, the rain came down in torrents soon after they started, and continued most of the day; and to make matters worse, the steamer did not arrive till late at night. Long before that time our poor people had come home, tired, draggled, and sorely disappointed; and the day that had promised to be so fine a holiday ended in a disastrous failure.

Louis and the others did not return, as they were going to a *fono*, or festival, at Malié on the Friday, and it was easier to start from Apia. I could not quite make up my mind whether to go with them or to stay at home; I feared it would be too tiring for me, and yet I wanted so much to see the *fono*, that, in true British style, I finally

let myself be guided by the weather. Friday morning, however, was so fine that I roused the household at five, and announced that I would start in an hour; which I did not, but I did manage to get off before seven, riding, with an attendant also on horseback, to carry my waterproof bag with a change of clothes. It contained also my *very best* cap with long streamers, which Belle had implored me to bring for the edification of Mataafa, and to do justice to the occasion.

I reached Apia before eight, and found Louis and Belle all ready; but alas! they had trusted to C—— T—— to secure the boat, and he had forgotten all about it. At first it seemed as if none were to be had; and it was fully nine before we got an old tub with no sail and with broken rowlocks, and two very weak and stupid-looking boys to row us. As the boat was a heavy one, and we were six of a party, including C—— T—— and Tauilo the chiefess, Talolo's mother, we regarded our rowers with many misgivings; and our premonitions of evil soon proved to be well founded. We had only gone a short way when we saw that we were so late there was a great chance of our missing the tide; and to do that in our heavy boat meant that we should have to spend at least three hours on the reef in the blazing sun. Consequently C—— T—— proposed that we should stop at a village near by, and borrow canoes, which of course are so

much lighter, and draw so much less water, that we should be able to get on with much less difficulty. It was some time before we could get any canoes, however, but at last two were brought out; C—— T——, Louis, and I got into the larger, and took with us my waterproof bag and the two big tins of biscuits we were taking as a present to Mataafa. My bag was arranged as a seat for me; and Belle says I proved myself a born traveller by the smiling composure with which I sat down right on top of my very best cap. I cannot, however, say much for my composure, at least at first; one has but a 'cogly' seat in a canoe at best, and perched on my bag I was so high above the low edges of the boat that it was very difficult to balance myself. I confess I held on with both hands till I got a little used to it; and I felt my feet and legs very superfluous in a vessel where no room was provided for them. Nevertheless, in spite of 'needles-and-pins' and a cheerful uncertainty as to whether I should not presently find myself in the water, I resigned myself to the situation, and even ended by enjoying it.

In the meanwhile Belle and Tauilo had preferred to stick to our own boat, now that it was lightened of so much weight, rather than trust themselves to the other canoe, which was a very small one; and though they still stuck frequently on banks, they always got afloat again, and we stood by to help when needed. It was very

slow progress, however, and time was flying; so at last Louis, Belle, and Tauilo elected to walk the rest of the distance, and left the canoe to C—— T—— and me. We got to Malié before them, only to find we were so late that we had missed all the war-dances and a great part of the show; we should have been there by 9.30 had the boat been ordered and ready, but as it was, we, the advance-guard, did not arrive till after one. Was it not provoking? And even as it was, we had the best of it; for our poor walkers had to wade through three miles of black mud mixed with sharp stones, and I believe would have fairly stuck but for the help of Tauilo, who is an immense and very powerful woman; and who, when they did emerge, washed their poor feet in a stream as tenderly as if they had been her own babies.

Meanwhile C—— T—— had taken me to Mataafa's house, and introduced me to the king, who rose from his mat, and received me with extreme cordiality, and had a chair placed for me where I could get the best view of all that was going on. He is a really fine-looking man with a delightful expression of benignity and great charm of manner; I never saw any one in any part of the world more simply courteous and dignified. He is also a very devout Roman Catholic, and it was odd to observe him telling his beads while he watched all that was going on; the contrast was the more curious, as it was

by far the most barbarous scene I had come across in Samoa. The green lawn on which the village was built was scattered over with awnings of all kinds: some were contrived from boat-sails, some merely branches of trees stuck into the ground, others, more elaborate, were of light posts tied together and roofed in with a thick layer of coconut leaves. However constructed, they were all full; every inch of shade was packed with gaily dressed natives; the houses themselves were crowded, and even the church was made use of. Louis, when he arrived, calculated that there were quite seven or eight thousand people present. Here and there upon the grass were great heaps of gifts that had already been presented, and were piled up and left 'on view'; while objects that looked like roughly made hat-stands were stuck into the ground at intervals, and used to show off the innumerable smaller presents, such as whisks to keep the flies off, fibre for straining *kava*, fans of many kinds, and a great number of shining yellow balls that I took to be fruit, but which I found to be small gourds filled with coconut oil. Meantime, while I looked about me, the present-giving was still going on briskly. Each village marched up in procession, every man carrying a gift; one of the king's men, resplendent in spotless *lava-lava*, scarlet flowers, and a shining brown skin, received the things evidently according to rule and custom. When, for instance, he

took each roast-pig in his arms, like a baby, he turned twice round to show it off to the surrounding crowds, and made some jocular remarks that I wished I could understand, for every one laughed. His manner reminded me of an auctioneer at home, and I fancy some of his hits were personal, but given and taken in thorough good-nature. . . . And while he was receiving and displaying the gifts, and amusing the people, other king's men were busy making lists of all that was brought in; one could not but be struck by the mixture of barbarism and careful method of it all, a mixture that in many ways seems to me to be characteristic of Samoans.

Besides ourselves, only a few of the principal chiefs were admitted to Mataafa's house. Among these was an old 'talking-man' called Popo, with a face exactly like the well-known head of Dante; a likeness remarkably heightened by the green wreath which he wore about his brows in the same familiar way. He had come with his son that day, for the first time, to give in his allegiance to Mataafa; a great matter for the king, as they represent one of the most important families in the Islands, and have the right to bestow on the monarch one of the royal names, *Tuiatua*. According to C—— T——, they were very great people indeed, taking precedence of most of the other chiefs; in fact they were 'just like our dukes at home' (!). The son had

brought with him a dear little daughter about three years old, from whom I could not keep my eyes; her baby dignity was so imperial, and she sat with her little legs crossed and her fingers turned out in exact accordance with all the 'high-chief' conventions.

When Louis and the others arrived, cocoanuts were handed round and were very refreshing; and very soon after the *kava* was brought in with due etiquette and solemnity. When it was offered to Mataafa, there was a startling interlude; Popo and his son in turn rose and *howled* out praises of the king in a most extraordinary and ear-splitting fashion. It appears that they have a hereditary right to do so, on occasions of state, and they certainly made full use of their privilege. Meanwhile I had time to observe the king's house, which as yet I had not attempted to do. It is very much finer than Malietoa's, much higher in pitch, of better workmanship, and made of more valuable kinds of wood; and while it contains fewer ordinary articles of civilisation, there is nevertheless a certain appearance of taste and nicety which are in themselves civilised. There was no bed, but there were a good many chairs with very fine mats thrown over them; and there were two tables on which were flower-glasses very prettily filled with flowers. At one of these we were presently asked to dine along with the king; we had an excellent meal of very good fish, large

crayfish and roast-pig, baked *taro*, and a magnificent pineapple, the best I have ever tasted, so full of juice and flavour. There were plates, and knives and forks, and (wonder of wonders) even salt; this is very seldom seen at a native feast, but Mataafa had it handed round in a glass bottle, an excellent plan, as it soon gets damp in this climate. No one sat at table with us save the king, and we were most deftly and prettily waited on by his natural daughter, who keeps his house and appears to be his constant personal attendant. Altogether it was a curious mixture of much that is good in both native and white habits, and seemed particularly suited to Mataafa's own refinement and dignity. But when the meal came to an end, the barbaric note was again suddenly emphasised; Popo's son emitted another amazing howl in honour of *Tuiatua*, and the king was evidently deeply gratified. Well, I dare say some of our own ways are quite as senseless!

Returning to our posts of observation, we found that the list of presents was now being read aloud. I cannot attempt to give you an idea of the amount, but I remember there were some 6000 roots of *taro*, 390 roast-pigs, over 200 live chickens, 1 live calf, 1 turtle *for the king* (please note), and a great many pieces of *tapa*, one of them a hundred yards long. It was curious to see it carried in at full length by over fifty men. No sooner was the reading finished

than the distribution began, by Popo and his son rushing into the open space where the gifts lay and *dancing on the top* of all the things that they claimed as their share—for you will not have forgotten that at all feasts, and particularly at royal ones, the guests have rights over the edibles. It was a most extraordinary and weird performance, and banished all remains of civilisation from the scene. I was greatly interested to notice that they claimed a large heap of roots and fruits, one of our boxes of biscuits, the live calf, and the long piece of *tapa*; but as soon as their rights were proved and acknowledged, they gave all back to the king save the *tapa* and, I think, the biscuits. I forgot to tell you that when Louis's gift was read out, he was described as 'His Excellency Tusitala, Chief of the Great Powers,' which really sounded most impressive; but by this time I was getting anxious as to what our new dignities demanded of us! If we had had to 'dance for our supper' like the amazing Popo, it would have been a 'sight for the gods.' Mercifully, we were not required to put in a claim for our share of the spoils, as Mataafa himself looked after our interests; and you may imagine that we were surprised and touched to find, included among our gifts, the *one turtle* that had been especially sent to the king himself. Louis would have refused to take it, had it been possible to do so, but it would have been too great a breach of custom

and courtesy. We were given, besides 2 pigs, 2 baskets of *taro*, 5 live fowls, a lot of *kava*, 3 bunches of bananas, and 4 fine pieces of *tapa*; one of which Mataafa especially presented to me. Altogether, we were a queer boatload when we started homewards, and we felt very much as if we belonged to the Swiss Family Robinson.

We left about 5.30; but our difficulties were not over yet, and we did not reach the hotel till after 9 P.M. It was a very dark night, with several heavy squalls of wind and rain; sometimes the wind was so strong that we could not speak and had to gasp even for breath. When it was fair Belle and Tauilo, and a friend of hers who was returning with us, sang Samoan hymns to keep our spirits up; and their voices sounded very pretty over the accompanying splash and gurgle of the water. But we were all soaked through by the time we got to the hotel, and thankful to get some clothes that, if not quite dry, were *less wet*, out of our bags. At first we were told we were too late to get any supper; but at sight of our dismay they managed to produce bread and cheese, beer and brandy, and with these we had to be content. We were indeed too tired to want more, and were only too glad to hurry off to bed; it had been a long day for us all, and still longer for me, and fourteen hours of open air and adventure were as much as I could do with. Next morning the

horses came for us at 9 A.M.; it was a pouring wet day, and we were still tired, but we so desired to be at home that we donned our wet things again and set off in the midst of thunder and lightning and a general deluge. We were back in time to get dry and comfortable before lunch, and were able to enjoy the turtle steak, which is like the most excellent beefsteak. It took me several days to get rested after my exertions, but neither Louis nor I got the slightest cold or harm of any sort from all the fatigue and the two duckings. Don't you think that says a good deal for Samoa?

June 6.

YESTERDAY Louis and Belle went to some races that were got up in honour of the queen's birthday, but had had to be postponed on account of the weather. From their account the luncheon, nicely served in a large tent, seems to have been the best part of the affair; there was only one horse that had had any training, and as he simply walked over the course and took all the prizes, the races could not be called exciting. It was a fine day, luckily, and a pleasant outing. To-day we have another storm of wind and rain, thunder and lightning; we are getting all the 'weather' now that we should have had months ago, and it really makes the climate too like Scotland!

June 19.

WE have been amazingly gay ever since I last wrote, but not in a specially interesting way. A new man-of-war, the *Curaçoa*, has come into the bay, and that has led to many calls, lunches, teas, and dinners. I went down with the others to tea on board, and enjoyed it all very much; and for the first time rode home *in the dark*, which I have never done before, and am not in a hurry to try again. The road is so bad, and the 'going' so uneven, that it is rather like being at sea, only one has the added anxiety of being one's own pilot; I made Lloyd ride close in front, and guided myself as best I could by the glimmer of his white coat. The phosphorescent lights from the decayed wood, however, were lovely, like pale moonlight under the great trees, dimly glimmering in the shadows.

On Friday Louis gave a family feast to all our people, including a few of their relations, specially invited. The boys took charge of all the preparations, and we partook of the feast as their guests. It took place in one of the new native houses that we have recently put up, the pillars of which were beautifully wreathed with flowers and ferns. The food was spread on leaves in the usual fashion; there was nothing very novel, save that the fine prawns were from our own river, and that to the usual

delicacies were added twenty-five pounds of fresh beef and quantities of ship biscuits, both great luxuries to the Samoans. We were all seated at one end of the 'table,' and just opposite to us were the 'house-ladies,' Helèna and Faüma, with Arick between them, most effectively decorated with scarlet hibiscus blossoms. The usual *kava*-drinking took place after the meal, and the names were called out by a 'talking-man' belonging to Talolo's family; for a chief in Samoa never makes a speech himself, but keeps a hereditary 'talking-man' to do it for him. The order was Tusitala, Fanny, 'Old Lady,' Loya (Lloyd), Tuila (Belle), and little Austin. When this was over Louis made them a little speech, telling them how glad he was to see them there, and thanking them for all the good work they had done; and Helèna's father made a very nice reply, full of gratitude for Lou's interest in his people and their customs, 'which the white men on the beach know nothing about.' Altogether the family feast went off very well. By the bye, it is quite true that the proper native way of preparing *kava* is to have the root chewed by young girls chosen for their beauty, then it is steeped in water (but not fermented), and after many strainings it is handed round. But a great many people now grate the root instead of having it chewed. We always have it grated, and when it is given to me elsewhere I just devoutly *hope* it has been grated, and think

it safer to ask no questions. You see one cannot refuse it without giving offence.

And now I must wind up this long letter with one last exciting episode, which might easily have had a tragic ending. About 11 P.M. on Saturday night Fanny woke me and told me that Paatalisé, one of our boys, had gone off his head, and as he was very violent she had come to get some sheets with which to tie him down. He has always been well behaved and very quiet, and we have lately taken him into the house as an extra hand; but he comes from Wallis Island, and unfortunately only one of our boys understands his language; and as he is very slow at picking up any other, it is hard to hold any communication with him. We fear that this solitariness has brought on this attack, as his delusion seemed to be that his own people were waiting for him in the bush, and he must go to them; which, of course, was impossible to allow, as he would only have lost his way and probably died of starvation. It took the united efforts of all the men on the premises to keep the poor fellow from escaping, and even after he had been tied down to the bed with sheets and ropes he managed to get free. Just then Lafaële, who had been out visiting some friends, came home and at once said he could cure him; he went out and got some leaves, and after repeating some incantations 'to drive away devils,' he chewed them and put some of the juice into

the patient's eyes, ears, and nostrils, half choking him so as to force him to draw it in. Marvellous to relate, in a quarter of an hour the poor boy was in a sort of comatose state, lay very quiet till morning, and when he got up, seemed very much in his usual.

Louis, however, felt a good deal worried about him. The boy is a stranger here, and there is neither hospital nor asylum to send him to; and in case of another such attack coming on unexpectedly, he felt we ought to have some means of securing him, for his own sake. So Lloyd was despatched to the *Curaçoa* to see if Dr. H—— could help us; and as it turned out that he had been doctor in an asylum for two years, he offered to come up and see the patient, besides sending us a strait-jacket. He arrived a little later, with two other officers with him, and they all stayed to dinner; after which Paatalisé was professionally inspected. Dr. H—— thinks he may never have another attack, but quite agrees that we ought to be prepared for any possibility; he ordered some medicine for him, rather under difficulties, as the visit had to be conducted in an unusual fashion, viz. Paatalisé spoke to Savea, who translated it into Samoan to Lafaële, who translated it into pidgin English to Fanny, who finally conveyed as much of the meaning as still survived to the doctor. Rather a roundabout conversation, wasn't it?

THE VAILIMA HOUSEHOLD

Vailima, June 26, 1892.

AFTER the excitements of last month, this week has been comparatively quiet, and I have not been sorry to 'rest and be thankful.' In the absence of news, therefore, I am going to answer a question of yours that I think I overlooked. No, we have no snakes here; and not many poisonous or dangerous creatures of any kind. True, there is one kind of centipede, I believe; but I have never seen one, and no one here has been bitten, so I imagine they cannot be very common. On the whole, our plagues may be said to be *small* ones, flies and mosquitoes being about the worst; while a worm that destroys furniture, and the mason-fly that gets into books and papers, are nearly as bad. The ants have not as yet discovered Vailima, or so we suppose; at any rate, we are not troubled with them, which is a comfort, as they are a terrible nuisance in a house. Lastly, there is a tiny, almost invisible creature that makes its way into the most carefully closed boxes, and inside pincushions, working havoc wherever it goes; and it can even get inside a watch and clog the mainspring, as I and my repeater know by sad experience.

Paatalisé, I am glad to say, has had no return of his attack of mania, and looks quite himself again. He and Mitaele, Talolo's young brother, are our table-boys now; they are very good and

attentive, and at present so satisfactory in every way that Lloyd calls them the 'twin angels.' He says they recall some Scripture characters, but is not quite clear which; Shadrach and Meshach, perhaps, though in that case there must be an Abednego still undiscovered to complete the set, unless that one has been broken! . . . There is one great trial here, from which every one suffers at times; no sooner have one's servants learned their work and put by a little money, than an inevitable restlessness comes over them, and they must be off on a *malanga*, or journey. It may be only a sort of pleasure-trip, from which they presently return; but quite as often they remove entirely and settle down somewhere else, until the desire for a *malanga* comes over them again. We have just parted in this way with 'Tomassie,' our handsome Fijian boy, and Helèna, his wife; they have gone to Tonga, and there is no saying whether or not they will return. Meanwhile in Helèna we have lost our washerwoman, and have now to send all the clothes down to Apia, a plan which suits fairly well in the dry season, but would be impossible in the wet. Before that time, however, we may have seen our way to some other arrangement.

I am not sure if I told you that I have a new horse, and am so glad to feel myself independent again. Mr. C—— bought himself a stronger and faster beast for his heavy work, and was

only too glad to find a purchaser for his old one, Pacha; and as he is the one they have often (since Tin Jack's death) sent up to take me down to church, I know him well and can vouch for his behaviour. Indeed, he is so quiet and gentle that little Austin can be trusted to ride him alone, and it will sometimes be convenient to send him on messages into town. A horse here is really something more than a luxury, as without one it is impossible to get about; so that, ever since my poor Tin Jack died, I have felt dreadfully helpless.

The second 4th July 1892.

SURELY now I have been round the world, since at last I have done that to which I used to look forward, I have 'gained a day.' It seems that all this time we have been counting wrong, because in former days communication was entirely with Australia, and it was simpler and in every way more natural to follow the Australian calendar; but now that so many vessels come from San Francisco, the powers that be have decided to set this right, and to adopt the date that belongs to our actual geographical position. To this end, therefore, we are ordered to keep *two Mondays* in this week, which will get us straight.

I have had a busy and happy time since my last instalment. When I went to church on the 26th, Mrs. C—— told me that I was invited to go

with her to the Mission stations at Malua and Leulumoenga; we were to start on the following Thursday, and would be away for a week or ten days. I was greatly delighted; for, as you know, this expedition, which I had so long desired, had already been more than once put off, and I had begun to fear I should never compass it. However, the day came, and very quickly; and I set off from Vailima at 7.45 A.M., Arick riding with me to carry my portmanteau. We left Apia about nine in the Mission boat, a party of five; Mr. and Mrs. C——, their little son and his nurse, and myself. It is a large and delightfully comfortable boat, with an awning to keep off sun and rain; there were twelve rowers, a steersman, and a 'monitor' to keep order, and the boys sang together very sweetly for a great part of the way. The coast, as we passed along it, was varied and exceedingly beautiful; there was a succession of lovely green bays, with thatched houses peeping out from among the coconut and bread-fruit trees, separated from each other by thickly wooded headlands.

We reached Malua in about two hours, and were most warmly welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. M——, who were to be our hosts; as well as by the two ladies who are soon to manage the girls' school at Papauta, not far from Vailima. Till the house is ready there they are living at Malua, with nine Samoan girls, who will form the nucleus of the new school. Malua is charm-

ingly situated; the two white-washed and thatched Mission-houses are at a short distance from each other, on a green lawn, which slopes down to the sea, and is dotted over with very fine coconut, bread-fruit, mango, tamarind, orange, and lemon trees. The University buildings are a little behind, and to one side of the Mission-houses; we visited them, and the quiet, pretty graveyard, after dinner, and Mr. M—— gave me a most interesting account and explanation of everything. I don't mean, however, to tell you about the students, interesting as they are, for I am sending a full account for Mr. N——, which you can read before sending it on to him.[1]

On Friday morning we rode 'round the boundaries,' which means round the three hundred acres of land which belong to the institution, and which the students cultivate to supply them with food. It took us quite an hour to make the circuit, and I am sure we saw enough bananas and bread-fruit to feed a regiment; they represent an enormous amount of nourishment, when well cared for, especially as Mr. M—— says that bananas alone, without any other article of food, will amply support a strong, powerful man. In the afternoon we walked about the grounds and inspected a limekiln that the students had made to burn lime from coral picked up on the reef. On Saturday morning

[1] See extract at end of letter.

we went for a long ride, through a magnificent forest, and across a deep river, which was not very easy to ford; we had to hold up skirts and feet to keep them above water, but the horses are quite used to such little diversions. In the afternoon we went to a prayer-meeting with all the students; and when we came back to the house after it, I was informed that the students' wives were coming to bring me a *taro-tasi*, or gift. Presently a number of women, all dressed in white, came along the path, singing as they came; I had been told that they generally improvise their songs, and was able to make out that they were singing about the *tamaitai Beritané*, the 'British high-born lady.' I stood on the verandah to receive them, and each woman as she came up shook hands with me, and presented her gift. They gave me in this way eleven fans, three tortoise-shell rings, and thirteen eggs; then they all sat down on the grass, and the principal, or highest-born woman among them, made a speech, saying how glad they were to welcome me to Malua, and how grateful for my interest in them. Mrs. M—— translated it to me, while I sat in the verandah with my gifts (all save the eggs) piled in my lap; then I said a few halting words of thanks in reply, and regretted more than ever that I was born so long before the days when women were expected, or indeed permitted, to speak in public. When this was over, Mrs. C——'s boy

(who had come with her from Apia) acted as my 'talking-man,' and came forward and shouted out the list of all my gifts, just as they had done with Mataafa's at Malié. It made me feel 'every inch a (Samoan) king'—or queen, to be more exact.

It was all very nice, and I was very happy; but every rose has its thorns. The trade wind blows right through the M——s' house at Malua, and I not only felt it disagreeably cold, but got a rather bad attack of neuralgia and a swollen face in consequence. This was vexing, as, though I was able on Sunday morning to go to church, and to join in the Communion with the students and their wives, I had to spend most of the afternoon in bed, instead of accompanying Mr. M—— in his boat to another village a few miles away, as I had hoped to do. However, it could not be helped, and on Monday morning I felt better, and was in less pain.

In the forenoon the nine girls who, with their teachers, are waiting here till the new school at Papauta is ready for them, brought me in their turn a *taro-tasi*; which, by the way, literally means 'one *taro*,' but is applied to a small gift of any sort, a root of *taro* being a very usual present, especially from school-children to their teachers. The girls came singing in the same fashion as their elders, and indeed all the proper ceremonies were observed; they presented me with two pieces of *tapa*, five fans, and two tortoise-shell rings, all

of which were duly called out by my 'talking-man.' I was struck, as I always am, by the easy speech and graceful manners of these half-grown and very shy Samoan girls; some of them were very pretty, and all were gentle and polite. Their movements, too, are so full of natural grace. This was very evident this morning, when for some time I watched some women fishing in the sea; literally *in* it, for they stood in the water in a ring, to enclose the fish, then caught them with their hands, and tossed the silvery creatures into the baskets tied upon their backs. They seemed to me to be as lithe and supple as the wriggling fish themselves, and I watched the pretty sight, thinking that, easy as it looked, the fish must be very plentiful to make it possible. I do not know what kind of fish they caught this way, but we had some for dinner, and they were excellent, small, but well flavoured.

On Monday afternoon Mrs. C—— and I (her husband had had to return to Apia for the Sunday services, but would meet us later) said good-bye to our kind friends at Malua, and started on horseback for the Mission station at Leulumoenga, which we reached in about an hour. It was delightful to canter along the lovely shady road, overhung by coconut and bread-fruit trees, with the sea shining between their stems on the one side, and dense bush, occasionally topped by a mountain-peak, upon the other. The path was good, but in places

rather blocked by trees, which necessitated care in riding; though it was quite an enjoyable sensation to put one's head down and dash through swaying coconut fronds, feeling oneself absolutely wrapped for a moment in the cool fresh greenery. We passed through several villages, for this is a populous district; and though one is very like another, this is scarcely a disadvantage where all are beautiful. The fresh green lawns on which they stand, thickly set in foliage and studded with fine trees, are like the glades of some lovely park; and as many of them open on the sea, there is a wonderful effect of light and air.

Mr. and Mrs. H—— are our hosts at Leulumoenga; the house is very similar in appearance and situation to the Malua Mission, but it is not so much exposed to the wind, and so is less draughty. We met with the same kind welcome as before, and I felt all the time as if I were paying visits to Scottish manses; there was the same feeling of being at home, and amidst familiar surroundings. There is the High School here, for advanced scholars, where boys who do not wish to go into the Church receive a more secular training than at Malua; and to-morrow there is to be a special examination, with a display of industrial work done by the boys, which in fact is the reason we are here just now. In the meantime Mrs. C—— and I have been off for another lovely ride, with her

'boy' to help us over stiles; for you must understand these stiles are not, as with us at home, mere rustic fences, but formidable barriers at least three feet in height. Their object (which they don't achieve) is to keep the pigs of each village from wandering, and all Samoan horses are trained to jump them; but I may as well confess that I prefer to dismount and do my own scramble on my own two feet, while my horse jumps over, *without* me, on his four! I am sure it is more comfortable . . . for both of us! but of course it is as well to have some one at hand to help with this performance.

As we passed through one village we saw a number of persons in one house, very busy printing patterns on *tapa*. We stopped and watched them with great interest; they just strengthened all the thin parts by putting on patches, so to speak, or sometimes a complete second layer, fastening the two together by means of arrowroot starch. After this they stretched the *tapa* over blocks on which the pattern is already prepared in relief, and passed a brush filled with colour over the top, so that the raised part only takes it, while the ground remains white. It seemed a very simple process, and the results obtained are surprisingly good. A little later a shower forced us to take shelter in a house, where we found a woman making a design for printing the *tapa*; she was sewing it with coconut fibre on a thick dried

leaf, which, when it is ready, will be attached to the wooden block which I mentioned above. The pattern was very pretty and quite elaborate, and Mrs. C—— asked the woman where she had got it from; to which she replied that 'it was just the great cleverness in her own head' that told her how to do it. Here we also had an example of Samoan manners; a little boy was standing by and gazing at us, and his mother asked him how he dared to stand in the presence of these particularly high-born ladies? . . . sitting and crouching being the sign of reverence and respect here, as all over the South Seas. In the native churches they sit, both for prayer and praise, and to stand up during the service would seem to them most irreverent.

July 7.

I HAD no time to write more, and only returned home to-day; but I will continue from where I left off, at Leulumoenga.

In the evening, after our long ride, we were all busy getting the prizes ready for next day; measuring off pieces of print, and putting up little packages of needles and thread, thimbles and scissors, for the women and girls, while the boys got books, atlases, knives, and tools of various kinds. There were a great many prizes, though some were very small; and it took us the whole evening to get all ready. On Tuesday morning the stir began early; we had breakfast

at seven, then prayers, and then we all set to work to lay the cloth and make the preparations for dinner. It reminded me, almost sadly, of a Communion season at Colinton, long, long ago; I felt that if I only took the trouble to look, I should certainly find Mrs. R—— shelling peas in some quiet corner. . . . The bustle was increased presently by the arrival of our friends from Malua in their boat, just in time for a second breakfast; and almost before we had had time to welcome them, Mrs. C—— and I were despatched to the schoolhouse, to decide on the winners of the prizes for ironing. We selected a shirt, a coat, and a dress, and found later that all had been done by the same person, the wife of the native teacher; so she may be said to have thoroughly deserved her prize, though I think she only got the first, and the others went to the next—but a good way behind—in merit. By this time the Malua students, who had walked over, had arrived, and the business of the day began. The Mission party sat on seats placed on the school verandah, the scholars sat on the grass in front of us, and behind them an awning of poles and coconut leaves had been put up for the many native visitors and friends.

After a hymn had been sung, there was a prayer by Mr. C——, and an address to the scholars by Mr. M—— from Malua. Then the boys sang 'Three blind Mice' and other simple songs in English, keeping excellent time and

tune; and gave a display of their powers first in mental arithmetic, afterwards in physical drill, all conducted in English and most smartly and creditably gone through. As 'the Mother of Tusitala' I presented the prizes; and the proceedings wound up with the singing of 'God save the Queen,' when we stood up and joined in with that momentary but inevitable heart-sickness that the dear familiar words bring to all of us here, so far from home. In such strange surroundings it touched me very much; but I could not help wondering what the Samoans think of us for *standing* to do honour to the 'Great White Queen.'

After this we adjourned to the schoolroom, to inspect the things made by the scholars, such as models of canoes, *kava* bowls, and coconut cups, pieces of *tapa* and pattern blocks for printing it, native pillows, carved handles for axes, mats, and many other things. There was some talk of selling them, and I meant to buy some; but when the boys themselves were consulted, they said they wished to send them 'home' to the friends in England who had provided the school with a bell. It was, however, settled, quite to their satisfaction, that I was to choose any of the things that I liked, and in return send the boys that greatest of delights to a Samoan, a box of biscuits. So I have got a few things, and hope soon to have enough to fill a box that I shall send home *viâ* Australia. . . . After dinner

we all said good-bye, and at 2.30 the three boats started on the return voyage; we had much singing by the way, and having dropped our good friends at Malua, we came quietly on and reached Apia at 6.30 in lovely moonlight. The trade-wind was against us coming back, so our twelve oarsmen had to row all the way; but as we were inside the reef, the water was perfectly smooth and we travelled fairly quickly. I have come home greatly delighted with my *malanga*, and, I think, the better of it; and I shall never forget all that I have seen, and the kindness that was so constantly shown me.

July 9.

WE are having our 'cold' season now, and the thermometer is as low as 64° at 6 A.M.; it feels almost as cold as a frosty morning at home. Meat keeps quite well for a night just now, and we often have nice tender beef and mutton; a thing scarcely to be achieved in hot weather, when it must be eaten as soon as killed. This is really a temperate climate, however, as all through the hot season the thermometer never rose above 86° on the verandah, and 64° is the lowest that I have yet observed. What about the variation at home?! Nor do I miss the long home summer evenings now, as I have ceased to care for evening walks, and that was the only great pleasure connected with them. I think the loss of them is more than made up

by the absence of the short and gloomy days of winter; but as Lou says, life is all a pair of scales, and there's a deal of compensation goes to make up the balance.

[*Extracted, by permission, from letter written to the Rev. Dr. Nicol, then of the Tolbooth, Edinburgh, and Editor of the* Church of Scotland Mission Record, *in which paper it was published in October* 1892.]

. . . The two pretty Mission-houses are usually occupied by two English missionaries, who are the professors of this 'South Sea university city,' as Malua may be called. At present Mr. Newall is in England on furlough, so that the whole burden falls on Mr. Marriott, and you may fancy that it is by no means a light one when I tell you that, besides being minister and professor, he is doctor also to the whole establishment. The *talavai* (dispensary) bell rings twice a day, when the patients come up and receive advice and medicine from the window of the little dispensary; but besides that, special cases seem to be dropping in at all hours of the day. The university buildings proper are situated a little behind the Mission-houses; they are built in an oblong, the centre of which is planted with coconut and bread-fruit trees; there are nine white-washed and thatched houses on each side of this parallelogram, and at the end farthest

from the sea there are three larger buildings. The central one, which is largest of all, is used as church and lecture-hall, and the smaller ones are occupied by monitors, of whom there are four, to look after the students, and see that they keep the laws. Each of the smaller houses accommodates three unmarried students; it is divided into three by screens made of reeds, and each little compartment contains a bed, chair, a table, a bench for books, and a window, and they look most comfortable little places. Fifty of the students are married, and for their use there is an outer row of Samoan houses, which consist of wooden posts to support a thatched roof, the sides being formed of a sort of Venetian blinds made of plaited coconut leaves, that may be let up and down at pleasure. One end of the house has a raised floor of wooden boards, which forms the bedroom, and the lower part is the sitting-room. Each married couple has a separate Samoan house.

There are at present in the institution 105 students, 50 wives, and 23 boy-boarders, who assist in the work, get a certain amount of education, and may or may not stay on as students. All the students have first been taught in the village schools; there the promising boys are picked out, and pass some time in the family of one of the missionaries, where they are further tested, and if they conduct themselves well, they go up for the entrance examination, and if they

pass are admitted into the Institution. Here they stay four years, passing an examination at the end of each year, and when the final examination is passed they are ready to be called as pastors to any of the native villages. The missionaries are assisted by a native teacher, and the course of instruction includes writing, arithmetic, English history, Church history, physiology, theology, home and pastoral work. A few of the older boys are now being taught English.

Now I come to the great distinguishing feature of this institution, which is that it is entirely self-supporting, and costs the London Missionary Society nothing but the first cost of the land and the support of the two English missionaries; it seems to me that the greatest wisdom has been shown in the whole conception of the plan, and I suppose much of the credit is due to the late Rev. Dr. Turner, who is still much honoured and lamented here. When the work was commenced three hundred acres of land were bought to provide food for the students, and this land is cultivated by the students themselves; they also built the houses, and keep them in repair. The Samoan houses and the thatched roofs require to be renewed pretty frequently. Of course all this work leaves less time for study, so only three days a week — Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday — are devoted entirely to class-work. On Wednesday they work from 6 A.M. till 2 P.M.,

with an interval for rest, keeping the houses in order and weeding; in the afternoon there is an exposition. On Friday they work in the plantation, each man cultivating enough to supply his own family. They live chiefly on bananas, bread-fruit, and *taro*, with occasional supplies of fish. On Saturday they prepare for Sunday, cooking all the food that will be required in native ovens. On Thursday evening there is a Christian Endeavour meeting, attendance at which is entirely optional, but most of the students join. On Saturday afternoon there is a prayer-meeting.

The Sunday we spent at Malua, being the first of the month. I had the privilege of keeping the feast with this large and interesting Mission family. It is always pleasant to realise how the simple rite suits all climes and all circumstances, and may be understood even in a foreign tongue. In Samoa the juice of the cocoanut is used for wine. The students were mostly dressed in white kilts and jackets, reminding one of 'the white-robed multitude.'

. . . On Monday afternoon, after an hour's pleasant ride, we reached the next Mission station, Leulumoenga. . . . This also is a lovely station, more land-locked than Malua; a point of land runs out to the north-west, which seems almost to reach the island of Apolima, and beyond that stretches the island of Savaii. The peculiar feature of this station is a high school

for boys, which was started about two years ago. It was found that many young men went to Malua who did not really wish to be ministers, but wanted the higher teaching that they could get there. To obviate this difficulty, this high school for more secular instruction has been opened. The boys are from twelve to eighteen years of age, and if they wish to be pastors, they pass on to Malua when they leave the school. There is accommodation for eighty boys in ten houses, each presided over by a married monitor. This also has land set apart, and the boys work for their food. Hitherto all education has been given free at Malua, but here a nominal charge of two dollars a year is made as a beginning. This last year Mr. Hills set the boys to industrial work as an occupation for their leisure hours, and we were specially invited to be present at the examination, when the fruits of their labours were to be displayed. Tuesday the 5th was the great day, and the stir quite reminded me of a school examination in the old days in Scotland. . . . The examination proper had taken place before, and the prizes been awarded, and I had the honour of presenting them as the *Tina o le Tusitala*, which means 'the mother of the teller of stories.' Tusitala is the only name by which my son is known among the Samoans. The whole proceedings wound up with the singing of 'God save the Queen' by the boys; of course we all stood up and joined heartily, and it was

quite touching. I think I felt a little as the Israelites did when they sang the songs of Zion by the waters of Babylon.

The boys made a very good appearance, and were very wide awake, which did much credit to their teachers, as the Samoans are apt to be rather sleepy. . . . I see that I have forgotten to mention that Leulumoenga is eventually to be a normal school, where the students will go for six months when they pass out of Malua to learn how to teach. This will be of great use, as the village pastor is also the village schoolmaster. . . .

Vailima, July 25, 1892.

TO complete the list, we had a visit on Friday from the only other royalty in the island besides Malietoa and Mataafa. (I dare say you will think us prolific in royalties.) His name is Tamasese, and he is the son of that Tamasese that the Germans made king, and afterwards, in the time of trouble, deserted. The poor man, I am told, died of grief; and I can believe it, for Samoans feel things deeply, and sorrow reacts on them physically in a way unknown, or very rare, amongst our northern peoples. The son is a fine powerful fellow with a very pleasant face, and what Fanny calls 'a painted smile.' He prides himself on being a Samoan chief, pure and simple, and came dressed in nothing but a *lava-lava* of stiff *tapa*, with a red flower behind his left ear, and his brown

shoulders gleaming and polished like satin. He brought with him a 'talking-man' called Ungi, and another attendant who kept very much in the background; but Ungi was himself a chief, though of lower rank, and took his place beside us on the verandah to superintend the distribution of *kava*. C—— T——, who came with them to act as interpreter, told us that Ungi had been all through the war fighting for King Tamasese, and was considered a great wit and most amusing personage; 'in fact,' he amused us by adding, 'I only wish you could understand all he says; I assure you, he is *quite a clown*!' You see, in Samoa a circus clown is still appreciated in proportion to his rarity!

We gave them roast-pork and green peas for dinner, and Tamasese was greatly pleased with the 'small berries,' which of course he had never seen before. Afterwards Louis had some political conversation with them, and then we took them round the house, knowing pretty well by experience what would interest them—the tiger's skin, which they called the 'big pussy,' of course most of all. We happened to mention that Lady J—— and her party were to arrive shortly on a visit to Mr. H——, and that it was proposed we should all go for a *malanga* round the coast; and that we hoped she would get a good impression of Samoa. He immediately said that he would send his own boat, and make all preparations for the party; and said it,

too, with such evident goodwill that it doubled the kindness. He is to see Mr. H—— about it, but other arrangements may have been already fixed upon. I am afraid we shall be too gay next month, with these visitors and our own guest, G——,[1] even if he *is* a cousin, to entertain as well. But Mr. H—— will have the brunt of it to bear; he is giving up his own house to Lady Y——, and there are eight Samoan houses in the compound, one of them at present being fitted up as a sitting-room, which will be given over to the men.

July 27.

CLUB night, and the others are all gone to Apia in consequence. They have now definitely taken a room, as it was found inconvenient to be without a fixed abiding-place; it is really part of Mr. H——'s house, but has a separate entrance. There is a large room for dancing, etc., and a small one off it which can be used as a sitting-room, and will be very useful. Indeed, I am glad to say that our people have taken down mattresses and mats, so that if the weather turn very bad, or the night very dark, they can stay there till morning; a much safer place, I am sure, from my one experience of riding home by night.

Do you remember what I told you of our

[1] Mr. Graham Balfour—afterwards editor of the *Life of Robert Louis Stevenson*—who spent much time with them in Samoa.

'twin angels' that suggested Scripture characters, 'probably Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego'? Well, we have found the missing Abednego! Paatalisé, otherwise and commonly Shadrach, said that he did not feel well, and would like to go to some friends in Apia for a while; but that he would send a substitute to do his work until he could return. When the substitute arrived he seemed a very nice boy, with very nice manners, quite equal to the other two; but his name was Mitaele, the same that our Meshach rejoices in, so promptly and inimitably we dubbed the newcomer *Apéténéko*—the nearest he could manage to the original—and he is quite proud of his new name.

July 31.

ALAS and alas! our expectations were deceived, and Abednego has turned out a failure. He not only neglected his work whenever it was possible to put the blame of so doing on some one else, but persuaded Mitaele to go off at night with him to Apia, a thing strictly forbidden to all our boys; so yesterday morning he was paid his wages and dismissed. It is really annoying, as he could understand Samoan (he was a Wallis Islander like Paatalisé), and already knew a good deal about waiting at table. . . .

Did I tell you that the old lead soldiers that Louis used to play with at Bournemouth have turned up unexpectedly here? The game has

been started again with renewed vigour, and, to put it becomingly, a larger staff, as little Austin is allowed to take part in it, much to his delight, and is dignified with the name of 'General Hoskyns.' He is under Louis, from whom he gets written orders, which must be carried out without letting Lloyd see or discover them. He came this morning to tell me in great glee that he had 'taken a city.' To tell you the truth, however, I think Lou enjoys it quite as much as the child does, and puts as much serious effort and enthusiasm into a clever 'move' as into any of his literary work!

August 5.

I AM all alone at Vailima, the only white person on the premises. All the rest of the family are now in Apia awaiting the arrival of the steamer with G—— on board. It is a lovely day, and everything is looking its best; all morning I have been overlooking the boys, and trying to get the place into tolerable order. It is a constantly recurring worry here that no one can tell exactly when the steamer will get in; and if it is important to meet it on arrival, one has sometimes to wait not only hours, but days, at Apia. Louis, Fanny, and Belle went down last night, as Belle particularly wanted to see the captain to arrange about Austin going to San Francisco on the return trip; while Lloyd and Austin started immediately after breakfast

this morning with five riding-horses, and the two cart-horses for luggage. Quite a noble cavalcade. It is now 4 P.M., however, so I fear the boat has not arrived and may be late.

August 10.

WELL, the cavalcade returned in triumph on the afternoon of the 6th, bringing G—— with them. We are all delighted with him; he takes to Vailima ways like a duck to water, appeared the very next morning with bare feet, is willing and able to do anything, and already makes himself generally useful! Louis gives an amusing account of going off to the steamer, and, along with Fanny, anxiously studying all the visible passengers to discern which was our guest. I have G——'s own authority for saying that there 'was rather a measly lot on board,' some of them decidedly unprepossessing; so Louis and Fanny looked about them with sinking hearts, trying to pick out some one not *too* objectionable. They had just reluctantly agreed that one man *might* be G——, and Fanny had added, without conviction, 'Remember, he *may* improve very much upon acquaintance!' when they suddenly became aware of an unmistakable 'Balfour face,' and shouted with relief and welcome, 'Oh, there he is!' . . . He is already off to see something of the island, however. As Mr. C—— was going off on a Mission *malanga* this week, he invited

G—— and Lloyd to join him, and they left yesterday morning. They are going in the opposite direction to Malua, and will see the best scenery; it was very lucky to get the chance, as G—— naturally wishes to see all he can, and particularly wants to learn something of native life and habits where they are to be seen almost unchanged. It is fortunate that he can do so without the faintest difficulty or danger in Samoa. You must know that the Samoans were not cannibals even when the earliest missionaries arrived here; though some of their customs seem to indicate that they may have been so long, long ago. For instance, prisoners are still brought in tied up like pigs; and there are other habits that I forget, which still linger in some half-forgotten use. But there is no tradition of cannibalism having been practised, nor of how it came to be given up; and I often realise with wonder our feeling of absolute safety among the natives here. Sometimes on club nights Austin and I are all alone at Vailima, and he goes off to bed in 'Pineapple Cottage' quite unconcerned; while I do the same in this house, with all the doors and windows set open to the night and to any one who might choose to enter. How many places are there at home where one would care to do as much?

August 12.

WE are going to have an addition to our family; Talolo, our cook, has just told us that he is going to be married, and will bring his wife home on Sunday. He says she wants to work for us, but is very young and inexperienced. I hope she will prove a nice teachable girl, in which case she might become my maid; I do not altogether enjoy having a man working in and about my room. At any rate we shall try to teach her sewing and machining. We offered Talolo one of the two new Samoan houses recently put up for his new *ménage*; but he prefers his present room opening off the stables, which, as a matter of fact, have never been used *as* stables.

The Wrecker reached us by this mail, along with two excellent reviews, and the pleasant news that the first edition was sold off on the day of publication. Here is Lou's dedication, written in my copy: *To M. I. Stevenson, Dean of the University of Vailima, the following trifling volume is respectfully tendered by Robert Louis Stevenson, Professor of History in the same liberal institution!* I think I have told you already that I do not find this book cheerful reading, and some parts of it are fairly gruesome; but I believe it is a wonderful picture of certain phases in South Sea life. . . .

August 15.

G—— and Lloyd came home on Saturday; they found many of the villages almost depopulated, and very few children in the schools, indeed in one place the school was shut up for want of scholars. This was because all the people had gone in a body to Malié, to join Mataafa. Whether it means action on his part in the immediate future, we do not know; but it looks rather like it, I fear. To return to pleasanter matters, G—— and Lloyd enjoyed their *malanga* immensely; they visited Tamasese, who was exceedingly kind, got up a dance for their benefit, put them up for the night, and sent them back in his own boat. The greatest trial of the visit was the breakfast; G—— is a true Balfour, and likes to have his breakfast whenever he gets up, but in this case, after waiting an hour and a half, the only thing that appeared was the ubiquitous *kava*! And there was another even longer wait before anything edible was brought in. On the whole, after four nights on native beds, G—— was unfeignedly glad to get back to Vailima!

Talolo's little bride has arrived, and looks very modest and pretty; her name is Siuga. The room was decorated with flowers to welcome her, and we had all got little presents ready for her home-coming; mine was a looking-glass, Lloyd's the stuff for a *holaku*, Fanny gave

some other garments, and Belle some towels. Louis is going to give her a *holaku* too, but has not yet had time to buy it. I hope she will prove as sweet and gentle as she looks, in which case she will be a real treasure.

We had our first visit from Lady J—— yesterday. Louis and Fanny had met her already, in Apia, and Belle and I had meant to call; but yesterday we heard most unexpectedly that she was on her way to Vailima. We sent out word to the boys to make themselves look nice, and when she arrived we had three splendid fellows in *lava-lavas* and wreaths, girdles and anklets of fresh flowers and leaves, ready to take the horses. We had tea on the verandah, and then took our visitors to see Lafaële in his native house and Talolo in his kitchen; Lady J—— was delightful to them all, and admired everything to their heart's content. She says she is enchanted with Samoa, and finds it far lovelier than she ever dared to expect. But there is no time for more, as the mail must be off to Apia at once. . . .

Vailima, August 21, 1892.

THE Malié party was very successful, I only wish you could have seen the start; Louis and the others, with Henry as 'talking-man,' and Lafaële to carry luggage and look after the horses. It was the first time that Lou was attended ceremoniously with his own 'talking-

man,' and as a chief ought to be. Mataafa received them most cordially, and in the morning showed them some curious customs connected with *kava*-drinking, customs which in a sense are fossilised history. As, for instance, a stone had *kava* poured over it; a chief five times indignantly refused the bowl of *kava* offered to him, because it was not large enough; another chief lay down on the ground and pretended to be ill, he was then covered with a *lava-lava* and was given *loni-loni* (native massage), till at last he lifted his head just high enough to drink the *kava* with (apparently) great difficulty. All these scenes, so to speak, refer to real events, some of them very far back, but yet never quite forgotten; though I dare say the representation has frequently outlived all but vague tradition. . . .

The others returned, very tired, early on Wednesday, but Louis stayed to dine with Mr. H——, and came home at 9.30, looking quite bright and not a bit done up. I told him that he was the strongest of the party, after all! Our share in the *malanga*, however, has had to be given up, as it was found that if we all went we should be too numerous for any accommodation available. The weather, moreover, turned so wet, that I cannot say we missed anything; and I have not heard yet how Mr. H—— and his companions fared. I hope the rain will not continue and spoil the opening of the new schoolhouse by Lady J—— next week. I was there

the other day and found all getting fast into order; the two teachers are living there now, and everything is very nice. In the main building there are sitting- and dining-rooms for the ladies downstairs, besides the large school-room; and on the upper story, two small bed-rooms and the large dormitory, with verandahs back and front. Then outside, and quite apart, there is a kitchen and a native house, where the girls will take their meals, a most suitable arrangement.

The whole of us (excepting myself, since I don't accept 'evening engagements' nowadays) were at Mr. H——'s on Tuesday evening for a composite entertainment of dinner and reception. It was very amusing, I fancy; dinner was late, as Mr. H—— and some of his guests had been out driving and did not 'dress' till after the meal. In fact, when the evening visitors began to arrive there was no one to receive them, as Mr. H—— had not yet reappeared; so Louis had to act 'chamberlain' and present them to Lady J——. There were some decidedly amusing incidents, but everybody seems to have enjoyed it. Mr. H——'s house, I must tell you, is not only full of curiosities and interesting things inside, but is rather unusual outside, with mysterious iron bars and gratings, etc.; so Louis having declared that a first-rate Ouida-esque novel could be written about him and his surroundings, it was agreed to start it, each of

certain selected people writing a chapter. Lady J—— entered with great zeal into the project, and it appears that she and her brother have both written instalments; so have Louis, Fanny, and Belle, and I believe an epilogue and prologue are also in hand. I am not sure how many chapters there will be, nor do I yet know how it will turn out; but from bits that Louis has read or told to me, I am sure it will be very amusing, apart from the present fun it has given in writing. Moreover, I have just now heard Fanny's chapter read aloud; it is very clever and most entertaining, an account of the reception of last Tuesday, told in a most absurd and successful parody of Ouida's manner.

September 3.

A BUSY week. I believe I did not mention that the *Curaçoa* was in harbour, which always means a certain amount of gaiety. On Sunday we had Lady J—— and some other people to tea, and on Monday we all went to the opening, delayed from Saturday, of Papauta School. There was a large gathering of people, and the whole place was beautifully decorated with coco-leaves, ferns, and flowers; Lady J—— made a really excellent speech *ex tempore* with the greatest ease, and I envied her with all my heart. I have said before, and I cannot help repeating, that such an accomplishment seems to me *most* valuable and delightful. When the

little ceremony was over, we all walked up to see the waterfall; it is a good height and exceedingly pretty, with as usual the most beautiful surroundings. After tea on the verandah I came home; but the others went into Apia and dined at Mr. H——'s. The next day he and his party lunched with us, and we gave them all the Samoan dishes we could contrive to get together: roast-pig with *miti* sauce, fricasseed chickens (a native recipe), baked *taro*, *palusami* (which is coconut cream baked in *taro*-leaves), and another very nice preparation of coconut and *taro* of which I forget the Samoan name. There was also a Cape-gooseberry tart, which I imagine is neither quite Samoan nor quite English. As we were one too many for the table, Lloyd elected to act butler for the nonce; and Louis enjoyed the relief of being able to digest a feast, a necessary function which he declares is sorely interfered with by his usual anxiety to watch that our table-boys do not commit unpardonable errors. In *excès-de-zèle* and their desire to give each person a share of all that's going, they are apt to fill a claret-glass with beer, and have been caught in the act of pouring salad-oil into sherry!! Later on we had *kava* on the verandah, in full and proper style, with Henry Simolé as our 'talking-man' to call out the drinkers' names in due order; and the further entertainment was provided by the reading aloud of the co-operatic novel. It

has turned out a great success. Louis wrote the fourth chapter; but the epilogue, by G——, is pronounced to be 'the best of the lot.' There is praise for you! . . .

On Wednesday I left home at 8 A.M. to go with Mr. and Mrs. C—— to the school examination at Mootaa, a little village some two or three miles to the east of Apia. The village church serves also as the schoolhouse, and the pastor is schoolmaster; there were fully a hundred children, and the examination was really a most serious affair: Scripture knowledge, arithmetic, geography, writing, and dictation, all judged by exercises written on slates. You can imagine that the reading of all these, and giving them their appropriate marks, was no short task for Mr. C——, but he was pleased with the result; many of the children did very well indeed, though it is by no means considered one of the best schools. It was past six before we got to Apia, where I decided to stay the night; my 'folk' were in town anyway to dinner, and as we were to start early next day on a picnic to Papaéia, or the Sliding Rock, it saved me some fatigue.

On Thursday, then, we set out at 10 A.M. on horseback. We were between twenty and thirty people in all. It was a new road to me, and very good riding for the first two miles; then we turned off into the bush, where the path was narrow, rough, and muddy. There were many

PAPAÉIA—THE "SLIDING ROCK '

trees across the track, and frequently we had to turn aside and make a *détour* through the bush; not always very comfortable or easy, even on horseback, but we had some lovely peeps of mountain and sea between the green walls of foliage. At last we left our horses at the upper end of a gorge, and made our way, by a very rough descent, to the bottom; the 'sliding rock' then was found to be fully twenty feet high, with a waterfall rushing over its edge into the pool below. The great delight of the young people is to sit down at the top and allow themselves to be carried down by the water; it is very strange to see them dash down and disappear in a great shower of spray, but after the first time, which is rather breathless even for an onlooker, it is very amusing to watch. There were both brown and white among the bathers; but certainly the brown skins showed to great advantage over the white ones in these circumstances, and we were conscious of a sneaking regret that we belonged to such a bleached, washed-out-looking race! We had lunch on the grass beside the waterfall when the young people could be persuaded to leave the water, and in the afternoon we rode home, I, for one, frankly tired after two days' expeditions on horseback.

To-day, the steamer having come in a day sooner than was expected, Lady J—— and her party are off. I think they have enjoyed their

visit to Samoa, and I am sure every one else has; but after so much going on, we shall be none the worse of a little quiet and rest.

September 11.

ON Wednesday I went to the opening of the new native church in Matafele. We were fortunate in having a lovely day after several wet ones, and the church was crowded to the door; indeed, the people had to be asked several times to go out, in order to let others come in and have a share in the proceedings. They were all dressed in their best, many of the chiefs in white, and the young women in the gorgeous dresses that they wore at the 'May-meetings.' One very pretty half-caste was there in a *tapa* skirt, a low bodice trimmed with beads, and a wreath of multicoloured feathers in her hair. I was just thinking how it became her, and how pretty she looked, when Miss L—— turned to me with a shocked expression of countenance, and said, 'Only fancy, she is a teacher in my Sunday-school!' I rather wickedly replied, 'Well, why not? She is much more modestly dressed than many of our girls at home when they go to parties!' Which was true; and in this climate such a garb seems quite as suitable for morning wear. I don't think Miss L—— was convinced, however, though she said no more. After the prayers and speeches were over, the people all left their seats and marched

up to a sort of reading-desk, where they *dashed* down their contributions in the plate, just as I told you they do at the 'May-meetings'; the more noise the better, apparently. Neither the seats nor the passage were very roomy, and as there was a double row of people sitting in the passage itself, this proceeding took up a good deal of time, and made a great amount of confusion; but Mr. C—— told me that when he tried to introduce handing round the plate, the native pastor said to him, 'Missi, *we* want the money, and *they* not give half as much if not let give their own way,' and, as Mr. C—— added maliciously, 'You see, we publish no reports and lists of subscriptions.' It is quite a pretty little church, the roof lined with varnished wood in two shades, and the windows filled with stained glass; but the windows are too narrow to please me, and there is only one door at the end, which I think a pity.

We lunched afterwards with friends; and I was told a story of myself that may amuse you. A lady was describing Mrs. C—— and me riding home from the recent school examination at Mootaa (of which I told you). She declared that she made herself nearly ill only in trying, vainly, to keep us in sight; 'and as for Mrs. Stevenson,' she wound up, 'she is just a *storm on horseback!*'

I am now allowed to tell you the secret history of the last visit to Malié. Lady J—— was one

of the party! She was very anxious to see Mataafa, and sent word to Louis that she proposed to go anonymously, as his cousin; her brother was to be of the party, but it was thought more than doubtful whether, considering the circumstances, she ought to commit herself in such a manner. However, she got her way! Most elaborate arrangements were made for the conspirators' meeting outside the town, on the way to Malié; and it was given out that Lady J—— was spending the night 'with the Stevensons,' which indeed she was, but not at Vailima! Everything, as I told you, went well, and the secret was well kept; but things always leak out in the end in Samoa, and as the whole world knows now, we need not keep it quiet any longer. We suppose it was the knowledge of this visit that made King Malietoa receive Lloyd and G—— so coldly when they called on him a day or two after. He never asked them to sit down, and looked so much put out that they took leave very speedily, more out of compassion for him than for themselves. He, poor man, had evidently got orders from 'headquarters' as to his behaviour.

We are all off to Apia to see little Austin away by this boat, so I must stop. An Italian artist, called Nerli, has come here from Sydney to paint Samoan subjects, and has asked Louis to sit to him; the sittings are to commence as soon as the boat is away—we have all been too

busy to make it possible sooner—and we are anxiously hoping that, as he is said to paint very well, he will succeed in turning out a really good likeness. But somehow I do not think Louis easy to 'reproduce,' in any style!

Vailima, September 18, 1892.

LITTLE Austin is fairly off, and the house is terribly dull without him; as for me, 'Othello's occupation 's gone,' and I sorely miss my pupil. We sent him away in grand style, to cheer him up. We all went down to Apia the night before, and early on Wednesday morning all our people arrived finely decorated with leaves and flowers, and carrying baskets of fruit for Austin to take on board with him—limes, pine-apples, mummy-apples, and *barbedines*. When the *Alameda* came in, about twelve o'clock, Mr. H—— took us on board in the boat that belongs to him as Land Commissioner, with the English flag flying, four rowers and a steersman in red *lava-lavas* and white shirts, and Mr. H—— himself dazzling in white linen and 'official' buttons. We stayed to lunch, and found the passengers rather a nice set; there was one couple that Belle had met formerly in Sydney, and she put Austin into their care. Before we came away, moreover, he had already made friends with one of the stewards and the stewardess, so I think he will be all right. Of course the parting was a wrench to his mother,

but for the child's sake she kept up bravely, and when we came away at three o'clock we could see him waving to us, till one of the ladies on board came and led him out of sight. Then we all rode home to a 'tin dinner,' and found G—— driving in the cows to be milked.

On Friday Singa, Talolo's wife, had a very sore leg; it was badly swollen, and she was in acute pain, and would allow no one to touch her. The only thing visible was a small black mark on the side of the foot, where a piece of wood was supposed to have run in; and we thought that if it caused such pain, it might require to be cut out. G—— and I set off to Apia to see if the doctor could come up; but he was attending an anxious case that it was impossible to leave, and told us to put cold dressings on the foot in the meantime, give her morphia to soothe the pain, and send her down to him, as soon as it was light next morning, slung in a hammock. We returned home to find that Fanny had put cocaine on the wound, and almost immediately after Talolo's mother arrived and exorcised a supposed devil; with the unfortunate result that when the pain ceased (as it promptly *did*), each party claimed the merit of the cure! Yesterday morning, however, at six o'clock, the cavalcade duly started for Apia, Singa sitting in the hammock and looking very comfortable and pretty; it was slung on a pole carried by two strong men, with other two alongside to relieve them, and Lloyd

riding behind to see that they did verily go to the doctor, as there had been some talk of native surgery, which Louis would not allow. The Samoan doctors, I believe, use fish-bones for lancets, and blood-poisoning is very common in consequence. The party returned later in great glee, as the doctor said there was nothing in the foot, and that the pain was caused by an 'injury to the nerve,' the effects of which would pass off in a few days.

September 25.

WE have had a quiet and uneventful week. The portrait is progressing, and there have been some half-dozen sittings already; but I cannot say yet whether it will be thoroughly successful or not. Signor Nerli has walked both ways each time he has come here from Apia, and he told Louis that what struck him most about this climate was the absence of extreme heat. In Florence, where the winters are so cold, the summer heat is so great that all sorts of precautions have to be taken against sun-stroke; but here there is no danger, and no special care is taken by any one. So you see I am not alone in proclaiming this the real 'temperate climate of the world.' Moreover, if you want another proof of it, you should see the cabbages that Fanny has at last succeeded in growing here; they are larger and finer than any I ever saw at home, and when Talolo was

shown the first, he said, 'It is like a *German's head* . . .!' Louis declares that no one can appreciate the true flavour of a cabbage who has not spent six months on the line islands; and there is a real sense of triumph in turning out such fine specimens.

I don't think I told you that the long-talked-of addition to the house is now decided, the result, you see, of *The Wrecker's* success. The German firm has taken the contract, and the wood is ordered from San Francisco; they will set to work in November, and be done, we hope, in January. The under part of the addition is to be one large sitting-room, which will be a real comfort to us all in the wet season; and upstairs I am to have a fine new suite of apartments, besides which there will be two much-needed 'extra' bedrooms.

October 2.

THE mail arrived on Friday, bringing much welcome home news; but otherwise it has been again a quiet week. Louis finished *David Balfour* on Monday, to our great delight; and on Wednesday he was in a high fever, and once more I set off in search of the doctor. Unfortunately he was out, and I had to pursue him from place to place; I did not get home till past twelve, having been more than three continuous hours in the saddle, riding fast all the time. Pretty well for the old lady, isn't it? Luckily,

when the doctor came up in the afternoon, he calmed our anxiety very much by assuring us it was only 'brain-fag,' and would pass off of itself; and it certainly is not surprising, when one thinks of the amount of work Lou has done in the past year. He is resting now, and I hope will not begin anything new for a while, at any rate.

Thursday was Mr. H——'s birthday, and he came up to dine with us. It was quite a festive meal, and very gay; the servants were dressed for the first time in the 'Vailima livery,' Royal Stewart tartan *lava-lavas* and white shirts, the girls wearing the same *lava-lavas* with chemises, and all with flowers in their hair. They really looked very well in it. Lou was anxious to find a tartan that the Balfours might have some claim to, but I could think of none save the Mackenzie; and as that was collateral, he finally decided on the Royal Stewart. After dinner we all sat out on the verandah, and Lloyd sang songs to us in the moonlight; till a message was brought from the boys inviting us to a *siva*, or native dance, that they had got up in Lafaële's house all of their own accord. Was it not very nice of them? The raised part of the house made the stage, with candles in tin boxes for footlights, and the orchestra consisted of a log of wood rolled in a native mat, on which two boys beat time with drumsticks. We sat on mats on the lower part of the floor—the arrangement of a native house lending itself nicely to such a purpose. The

performers were dressed in short *lava-lavas* and many wreaths of flowers; most of the time they sat on the floor, cross-legged, and the principal movements were done with the arms, but the whole bodies swayed about in a wonderfully supple and graceful way. All the time they sang songs that they had specially composed for the occasion—songs about Tusitala and Tamaitai, Loya and Teuila: how Tusitala fed them with beef and salmon and biscuits, and how Tamaitai cured them when they were ill; how Loya scolded them when they were lazy, and how Teuila gave them fine dresses and put rings on their fingers. And 'right here,' as the Yankees say, I must explain things before I go further. Belle's name of Teuila means 'to adorn the ugly,' and was first given to her a good while ago because she was always dressing the girls with flowers. Then on Wednesday Fanny went to an auction in Apia to buy any stores that went cheap, and one lot of gilt wedding-rings and cheap thimbles being put up, Fanny made a small bid for it in joke. No one else, however, bid anything, so she came home the proud possessor of nine dozen wedding-rings—almost as bad as a 'gross of green spectacles'! We got much fun out of the transaction, and in the end all the boys were called in, and Teuila fitted a ring on the little finger of each, to their intense delight. . . . So now you can understand the allusions. When the rings were mentioned all

the boys held their hands up to show them off.

As soon as the sitting-dance was over they stood up, and two of them went through a mock fight. Then they acted a game of cricket, with a pail for wickets and a broom for a bat; and then we had a dance by three of the women, the same singing and swaying of the arms and body that displayed to perfection their beautiful supple figures. I had seen no native dancing before, and it was really very pretty and interesting.

Yesterday Louis was asked to give an address to Miss L——'s Sunday-school, and I went down to have the great pleasure of hearing him; how I wished his father could have heard him too!—but I consoled myself by thinking that perhaps he did. Poor Lou was rather upset by the first sight of his audience, for all the little pupils sit in front; and he declared afterwards that he found himself face to face with a most uninspiring infant school, gazing at him with goggle eyes without a spark of intelligence in them. He took the parable of the talents as a foundation. Then he told them that there were three talents at least that they all possessed, and must try to make a good use of: *tongues* that they must use to cheer and make happy all around them; *faces* that they must keep bright as new shillings, so that they might shine like lamps in their homes; and *hands* that must be kept employed in useful work cheerfully done,

and if they spent their lives in doing these things for the good of others, they might be told at the last, *Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these, ye did it unto Me.*

Yesterday Mrs. C——, Belle, G——, and I all started to ride to Utumapu, one of the German plantations at some distance from Apia. In fact, Belle broke down about halfway, and Mrs. C—— turned back with her, as she had often been before; so that G—— and I went on alone. It took us three hours to go and return, cantering hard very nearly all the way; but we were rewarded by a splendid view of lovely wooded mountains and dazzling blue sea from the height where the overseer's house stood. Then we rode into a lovely little valley to see the coffee mill; it reminded me of Hawthornden emphasised by very fine tree-ferns, large-leaved bananas, and trees wreathed with ferns, orchids, and *lianas* of many kinds. When I got home after this excursion I was certainly tired and rather stiff, but felt that I might, considering all things, be reasonably proud of my performances on horseback!

Now to answer a question of yours before this goes to catch the mail. Malietoa's salary, or allowance, is £12 a year, I believe, and he has only one wife; it is not true that she takes in washing; indeed, she does not do even her own, for there are many of the family 'hangers-on' always ready to see to such things for her. The

plan by which Mataafa was to become (nominally) Malietoa's daughter fell through because the followers of each party wanted to keep all the power to themselves, and they feared a division of honours. At present no taxes are paid, and the government has very nearly come to a standstill, and no one can see how it is to end. . . . It is odd to know that this very real trouble is going on, and yet to see about us so little actual evidence of it; life goes on so tranquilly, to all appearance. The other day I went to the first marriage that has been celebrated in the new Papauta school. The bride has been with the teachers at Malua for some time, and is a very handsome, well-born girl; she has married a Malua student. The little church was very prettily decorated, but there was one blot upon the scene: the bridegroom's clothes had been provided by his family, and much to the distress of the missionaries, he appeared in white trousers and a coat, and boots and stockings, and looked simply *horrid*. Before he left the church, though, he divested himself of the boots, which were evidently a most unusual splendour, and walked back on his stocking soles! And when he reached Papauta he changed the trousers for a white *lava-lava*, and looked quite nice; you cannot realise the difference it made in his appearance. I must say that in the pretty little church of Tanugamanono it had been a case of 'only *man* is vile'! . . .

Vailima, October 16, 1892.

I WENT down to Apia when the mail-steamer was in, and spent a long day in town; but the only interesting thing about it was that at the Mission work-party one of the sewing-machines was worked by . . . her majesty the queen! and very well she managed it, too. The mixture of such thoroughly prosaic and useful qualities as this, with an amazing richness of imagination and language, is a marked trait of the Samoans. On Thursday, for instance, the father of our new boy Asuelo (which is the native form of Ahasuerus) visited us, and made a long speech to Tusitala, comparing himself to the Queen of Sheba! She, he explained, had heard a great deal about the wisdom and greatness of Solomon, and when she came to see him she said, *Behold, the half was not told me.* In the same way *he* had heard much of the beauty of Tusitala's land, the splendour of his house, and his greatness in every way; and now that he had come to see it for himself, he, too, could use the language of the Queen of Sheba, and say, *Behold, the half was not told me.* He is a 'talking-man' by profession, so of course it is his business to make fine speeches, but Lou said he was unusually good at it; and Asuelo inherits the gift o' the gab, evidently, as it was he who got up the *siva* that I described in my last letter, and arranged most of the songs.

I do not generally trouble you with political disagreeables that I don't always fully understand, but I must tell you a little about a matter that has really distressed us a good deal, and which it is just possible you might hear about—perhaps incorrectly—from other sources. I am sorry to say it has to do with a Mr. ——, who was formerly connected with the Mission here, though for some time he had given that up to act as a sort of native advocate or representative before the Land Commission. He went home some months ago, and left some very painful stories behind him; he was said to have defended the proposal to blow up the prison with dynamite, and it was declared on good authority that he had suggested to the American consul that he should invite Mataafa to his house for a friendly conference, when the Germans were to suddenly appear on the scene, seize him, and deport him. Of course these things were very much against Mr. ——, and it was thought right in the interests of the Mission that the facts should be laid before the home authorities, as he was still nominally under their orders. I don't know whether any answer to this was received, but the general impression was that he simply would not reappear; so it was a rather painful surprise when he turned up in the last mail-steamer. It appears that the statements against him had been laid in his hands, and he had been sent back to clear his character; which he proposed to do by

bringing actions for libel against some gentlemen in Apia, and . . . Mr. Stevenson! (This because Louis mentioned the Mataafa incident in his book on Samoa, though of course he suppressed all names.) Ultimately, as it was thought that such actions would be very undesirable for many reasons, it was decided to take all the available evidence before a committee of missionaries who would send home a full report; which has been done, so that the responsibility of decision now rests with the authorities at home. Meanwhile Mr. —— is in a most awkward position here; he cannot, of course, return to his former work connected with the Mission, and the Land Commissioners do not care for his services either. It has made a great deal of trouble, and annoyed and distressed all of us; and I should not be at all astonished if something of it even reached your ears. I am glad to say, however, that we have lost no friends by it, and the missionaries here have been most kind and nice, though sorely grieved.

October 28.

ON Monday Louis was feeling so ill that we began to think nothing but a sea-trip would set him up again; he had been thoroughly overdone the day he had to give evidence before the committee upon that distressing business I have just mentioned. The meeting lasted from 6 P.M. to midnight, and Lou came home terribly

exhausted, and I do not think he has been well ever since. However, we sent for the doctor, who tried some new medicine; and it did him so much good that we hope the trip will not be necessary in the meantime.

We are beginning now to enjoy the fruits of our own planting. We have so many bananas that we are feeding the cows partly on them, as they improve the milk; one cow gets six pounds weight of bananas every day! Then we are luxuriating in pineapples, as many as we can eat, and the finest I have ever seen, so full of flavour and so juicy; I only wish we could send you a share of them. There are plenty of *barbedines* too, and the oranges are beginning to come in again; last year we never lacked them, but the absence of a proper rainy season has caused a sort of 'interregnum.' Fanny's garden is quite the wonder of the neighbourhood now; besides the huge cabbages, she has enormous egg-plants; one day a whole egg-fruit was stuffed and baked, and when it appeared at table we took it for a bullock's heart! Then the Cape gooseberries are still supplying us with delightful tarts; and our flowers are coming on fast also. Some plants of the gorgeous *flamboyant* are already fair-sized bushes with a good many blossoms on them, and when full-grown they will make large umbrella-shaped trees, covered with enormous flowers of of the most dazzling scarlet. We have a fine gardenia now coming into bloom, and several

pretty creepers about the verandah; one of them, a jessamine, has grown most marvellously in the short time since it was planted there. It is a pleasure to watch the pretty things flourishing and making themselves at home with us.

We have just had a visit from the captain of the steamer on which little Austin (of whom we have very good news) went away. He rode up here on a horse that he borrowed in Apia; it was bigger than any riding-horses we had, a matter of importance when I tell you that the captain weighs twenty stone! though he carries his weight wonderfully well. Unfortunately some of the natives told him it was a 'runaway horse,' which is so far true that it did bolt and throw its rider lately; whereupon the worthy captain absolutely declined to have anything more to do with him. Louis, in the dilemna, offered him our big cart-horse, which he accepted; it was most amusing to see him mount it from a step-ladder, brought out from the house. Up this went the great big man, and got on to the great big horse, which straddled its hind legs in the funniest way, as it settled under the load. . . .

In connection with this visit we had a rather curious experience. The day before we expected the captain a pig was killed in his honour, and hung up outside the kitchen door; but when morning came, lo and behold! there was no pig there. The question was, had any of our own

people stolen it? And in order to impress them with the enormity of such an offence, it was thought right to hold a solemn inquiry in the orthodox Samoan fashion. So Louis got Mr. W—— to write out a suitable prayer for him in Samoan, and a most impressive and touching one I believe it was; and in the evening the whole household was called together in the dining-room. Louis just read the prayer, and then each man and woman in turn came forward and took solemn oath, with one hand on the Bible, that he or she had not taken the pig, and knew nothing whatever of the thief. They all made this declaration with the utmost solemnity and with every appearance of truth; as G—— says, if they were *not* telling the truth, they would be invaluable (in some cases) as witnesses! I wonder whether we shall ever get the matter cleared up.

The wood for the addition to the house has arrived, and the road from Apia has been alive with black boys and bullock-carts bringing it up to Vailima. Yesterday afternoon the carpenters arrived and took up their abode in the stable; and this morning they are all hard at work, and already (9.30 A.M.) they have put up a wooden shed with an iron roof for use as a workshop, and sawing and hammering are going on briskly.

November 6.

ANOTHER little excitement which, according to some good folk, may prove a big one! Last Thursday we heard that an English man-o'-war had come into harbour, and Louis at once went down to visit her, and, if possible, find out the reason for this unexpected visit. She turned out to be the *Ringarooma*, from Auckland, and her officers don't know why she is here; they got telegraphic orders to come at once, and have now to wait for further instructions. The captain was very pleasant, so Lou promptly invited him to dinner here; while in Apia he had been shown a German paper calling loudly for his (Lou's) removal from the island, so in case the *Ringarooma* has come to deport him, he thought he might as well make friends with his future—well, let us say fellow-passengers!

I wish, however, we had been able to get a little more information. The captain was very nice, but knew nothing himself; he told us that his vessel was not fitted for work amongst the islands, but is specially intended for Australian stations. For one thing, she requires to be docked and have her bottom cleaned once in every four months! So he does not expect to be kept here long; at most probably for a month or two, when another vessel will be sent to relieve him. There are no middies on board this boat, and indeed very few officers altogether,

so it is not quite such an acquisition to Apian society as the *Curaçoa* was.

November 8.

IT is quite true that a German paper demands that Robert Louis Stevenson and 'all other white meddlers' should be at once removed from Samoa. Consequently some people say that the *Ringarooma* has actually come to take him away; others that it has come to protect him; and still others that its mission is to overawe the natives. If amongst them all they have not hit upon the truth, it will not be for want of variety in their conjectures!

Vailima, November 12.

YESTERDAY was a great day with us. As Lou's birthday is on a Sunday this year, and as G—— expects to sail in the *Lübeck* on that day, it was determined to have a grand celebration on Friday the 11th, in honour of the birthday, of G——'s departure, and of the completion of Talolo's new house. The feast was to be a native one, and held in Talolo's house, and the proceedings were to wind up with a *siva*, or native dance, which would take place in Lafaële's house. We invited a great many Samoans, villagers from Tanugamanono, relatives of our present household, that important personage the 'meat missionary' and his family, and several who had formerly been with us,

besides about twenty white friends who we know would enjoy the sight. Well, you must not imagine that such a feast is an affair of an evening.

The first contingent, from Tanugamanono, arrived about six in the morning with their gifts; they brought a pig, bread-fruit, fowls, *taro*, fans, pieces of *tapa*, shell necklaces and wreaths. Most of the presents were, of course, for Tusitala, but with true Samoan courtesy no member of the family was overlooked; my share, for instance, being a shell necklace and a fan. All these people came prepared to spend the whole day (and did so!), helping to cook the feast, and to decorate the two native houses; and really it seems to me a most kind and reasonable arrangement. Singa, Talolo's wife, presented a fine pig sent by her family. Lafaële brought another small pig, all ready cooked and beautifully decorated with flowers, pigeons, *taro*, and eight very pretty dishes made of coco-leaves and filled with a very excellent sort of pudding made of *taro* and coconut in some new combination. Besides these pigs, we had ourselves provided a couple of the 'inevitable beast,' a large hog and a smaller one, both of our own raising; and we had besides a great quantity of fowls, ducks, and salt beef, with any amount of bread-fruit, *taro*, *palusami* (another preparation of *taro* and coconut), and ship's biscuits. Talolo's house is a very long one, and there was a thick belt of provisions all

the way down the centre of it, spread on green leaves and decorated with flowers and many bouquets sent to Louis from native friends. I see I have omitted three very important items of the menu: eels and prawns from our own stream, and *palolo*, a very peculiar and highly thought of Samoan delicacy, which I confess I have not had the courage to taste. It consists of *long thin green worms*, which come out of the coral rocks in enormous quantities, but only for three days in the year; and always the same days, strictly regulated by the moon. I have never heard any explanation given of this fact, but fact it is, and a well-known one in the South Seas. It is a great 'ploy' to the natives to go *palolo*-fishing, which begins at four o'clock in the morning; and the creatures appear in such quantities that they can be ladled out of the water in bowlfuls, or with one's hands. In fact, they make their appearance with such regularity, that the '*palolo* season' is a recognised date, and one that can be counted on. Lest you should think they are eaten raw, I must add that they are fried, and served in a green mass exactly (to an uninformed observer) like a dish of spinach.

To return to the feast; each guest was provided with a plate and salt, these being the only innovations on the regular Samoan habits. We had not enough knives and forks to supply so many; so we all did without, and managed more

comfortably than you would imagine. Our own house-boys handed round the dishes, and by special favour the European guests were allowed a cocktail *before* the feast, though nothing save coco-juice was served during its continuance. After it was finished came the *kava*-drinking, with all the usual ceremonies; several speeches were made, one by Mr. H—— giving rise to great discussion, as he described the day as Tusitala's forty-third birthday. We protested indignantly, but had to confess in the end that he was right, if the first be counted; we usually only include the anniversaries, or completed years.

When we withdrew our house-boys and some other Samoans, for whom there had been no room at first, had their innings, and then came the grand division of the spoils; this was superintended by Talolo, and is a very serious business, as the guests must each receive a share proportionate to the gifts they had themselves presented. I suppose it all went off well, as they seemed very happy and contented; and I was reminded of the 'loaves and fishes' at sight of the baskets of fragments that remained after so much eating. Then followed the *siva*, very similar to the one I lately described to you. The worst of Samoa is that the entertainments never vary, so that once one has gone the round there is little new to say about them. Feasts are always more or less the same pigs, *taro*, and

coconut, plain and combined; and a *siva*, well, it is a *siva* wherever and whenever one sees it. But some of our white guests had never come across one, and were very pleased to have the opportunity.

November 24.

G—— is gone, and we all miss him sorely; in the three months that he has been with us he has 'grown with the family,' and our only consolation is that there is a chance he may return. . . .

The addition to the house goes on briskly, the carrying up of the wood came to an end last Saturday, and we quite regret the troops of black boys in their picturesque costumes of bright scarlet and blue. Making a wooden house seems a curiously simple affair; the foundations consist of a lot of boxes sunk into the ground and filled with stones and concrete, and planks laid down on the top of them. The wood is all cut into proper lengths before it arrives here, and it is put together very quickly; in fact, it seems to grow under one's eyes in an amazing way. The floor of the lower story is finished already, and we can walk about on it and admire the size of our fine large sitting-room; the outer planking, too, is finished all the way up, but the upper floor is not laid, nor the stair ascendable, so we must wait before we can pay further visits. They are hurrying on

the work, so as to get the roof on before the wet season fairly sets in; as it is, we have had a good many very heavy showers, or downpours, already. Perhaps in consequence we have all been a little out of sorts lately: Lou tired and not able for work; Fanny bothered with one of her heart attacks; and myself feeling very done up.

For news I must fall back on some of our most recent visitors. Asuelo, or Ahasuerus, the house-boy who got up the first *siva*, and whose Samoan name, by the way, is *Le Fau*, is now our family poet-laureate. He has composed songs descriptive of the whole family, one saying farewell to G——, and many others; and he and his wife came on Tuesday evening to pay us a formal visit, and to sing his songs to us. I wish I could give you any idea of the effect. The air of the farewell was most sad and plaintive, and Lou said very reminiscent of Highland 'farewells' in the same style; but I could not get any translation of the words, and had to take them on trust. Our next visitors were clerical—of sorts. First, two very nice Roman Catholic priests came to lunch; and next day we had another ministerial visitor, a Methodist native pastor, whose name is 'Tale Papalanga' (foreign house). He was dressed in white, with shoes and stockings, like a white missionary; and he was a very fine benevolent-looking man, with beautiful and simple manners. He was accompanied by his son and daughter,

and two attendants. He made a long speech to Tusitala, saying that he had heard much about him, that he had heard he loved *Faifeaus* (ministers), and always had *lotu* (worship) in his house, and so he had brought his son, and begged that Tusitala would take him as one of his boys. Louis replied that at present he could not take any new boys, as the wet season was coming on, when there was little work to do; but he promised to send for the lad whenever he had room for him. The name, Josepha, and the address were duly written down, to the old father's complete satisfaction; and we then showed our guests over the house, to their great enjoyment. When Tale Papalanga saw the old oak cupboard in my room with the date 1634 upon it, he said surely it must be as old as Noah! And the daughter held on to my hand all the time, with a trusting sort of feeling, I fancy, that I would take care of her in the midst of such strange sights. After this we gave them *kava*, and sent the good kindly people happy away. That reminds me that I wish you could see me o' mornings, marching all round the house on the verandah, ringing the bell for prayers. When I reach the back verandah, besides ringing I call out *Lotu, lotu!* and the boys and girls, wherever they are, call out *Lotu, lotu!* in answer. It sounds very quaint and pretty. One thing more, less edifying, about *lotu*; the London Society missionaries came here from Tahiti, and

their teaching is therefore called by the Samoans *lotu Tahiti*; while the Methodists came from Tonga, so *their* teaching is *lotu Tonga*. Mercifully they are on good terms with each other, and I confess I hope there cannot be serious difference in their beliefs.

We had the pleasure of a new and most picturesque (if temporary) table-boy the other morning. The day's supplies of meat had been brought up by two little boys, and Talolo pressed one of them into service; he was a handsome little fellow about eight years old, with his head entirely shaved save for a belt of short black hair about two inches wide down the very centre. He wore a spotless white *lava-lava*, and walked with the dignity of a little king; you should have seen the air with which he carried across from the cookhouse a dish with a cover on it shining (for once!) like silver, and set it down on the table with perfect grace and self-possession. He was really altogether delightful.

December 1.

WE spent most of Sunday inspecting and gloating over our new premises, which are now roofed in. The upper floor is laid and a temporary stair put up, so that we can go where we like; and we are all delighted with the new apartments. An open staircase, six feet wide, will lead from the *lanai* to the upper flat; and there is also to be a flying bridge leading

from Louis's new workroom to the verandah of the present house, in case any one wishes to escape without descending to the hall below. The new verandah is all laid now, and the roof being put on—on the lower floor, that is; there is to be no verandah upstairs except a small one let in, loggia fashion, to my sitting-room, with sliding doors such as I have now.

The time is drawing very near for my departure, and I shall soon be on my way home to you. As far as I know yet, I shall leave on New Year's Day in the *Lübeck* for Sydney; pay a few visits in Australia, and probably sail in the homeward-bound Orient steamer in March; but I shall write again before starting, of course, as a letter will reach you, *viâ* San Francisco, long before I shall be more than halfway.

Vailima, December 11, 1892.

IN exactly three weeks from to-day I sail for home; how near it comes. I only hope to get through the time all right, for just at present we are a sick and sorry household, all of us more or less out of sorts. It has been very wet, and perhaps we have got cold; anyway, whatever the cause, Fanny and Lloyd have ulcerated sore throats, and I have a cough, with a good deal of pain and sleeplessness. I think it is yielding to treatment, but I am particularly anxious to get quite well before I start.

December 15.

I BEGAN to laugh before I was out of the wood, and had scarcely written the above paragraph before I broke down completely. Since then I have had smart feverish fits, and though they seem to be better, am most distressingly weak. How my packing is to be achieved under the circumstances seems to me a hard nut to crack.

In spite of our ailments we have not been without visitors; indeed, we have been quite 'a home for the homeless' in times of difficulty. The C——s had to send away their little boy on account of the illness of a visitor, so Fanny invited him to come here; and I wish you could have seen his arrival. It was a very wet day, and quite a procession became apparent, advancing through the rain; two men were carrying a sort of palanquin contrived out of the child's box, and an erection of sugar-canes. Within this cage (which had no roof) sat the little boy, wrapped in his mother's waterproof; and his native nurse walked beside him and held up an umbrella over his head. It was most regal, and very funny. He is a nice little fellow, very good and quiet, and strangely enough, he is absolutely the first child that has ever stayed in Lou's house.

The next additions to our household were the F——s, mother and daughter. They have taken a cottage not very far from here, which has no

glass in its windows, only adjustable shutters; thus in wet weather they are compelled to sit in almost total darkness if they wish to keep the rain out. Lou thought this very dull work, and asked them to come here for a couple of days; and really they have greatly cheered us up, Mrs. F——, a delightful old lady, keeping us entertained with most amusing stories. To-day Lloyd and Miss F—— went off to visit the banana patch and the cacaos together; but as the hours passed with no sign of their return we began to be afraid lest they had lost themselves in the bush, and finally sent off all the boys to hunt in different directions. Henry accompanied one party, having armed himself with his clarionet, on which, as he explained, he would play reassuring harmonies that would guide home the strayed ones. Unfortunately he is not quite as completely master of his instrument as he thinks, and when his performances reached the ears of the wanderers on their way back, they thought they were the screeches either of some unfamiliar wild animal, or of some equally untamed black boys, and they hid among the trees till they could find out which it was!! As to themselves, they had never exactly been lost, but had wandered too far and were obliged to return by the bed of a river, which in this land of waterfalls and rapids is not easy work. They say they came across so many watercourses that 'Vailima' seems to be no misnomer after all.

December 18.

LAST Sunday, by the way, when Louis and I were both ill, there was a great discussion as to who should read prayers. Lloyd was willing to undertake the chapter in Samoan, but did not feel equal to the prayer; so I suggested that the chapter and hymn might for once be sufficient. Lloyd thereupon went to interview Yopo, who is our 'precentor' at present; and when he heard of our difficulty, he immediately undertook both the prayer and the hymn, and thus solved the difficulty. Moreover, it was, I believe, a really beautiful prayer that he made, and he did not forget to ask that Tusitala and the Tamaitai Matua might soon be better; and one petition was very touching, that they, the boys, 'might all be truly grateful for the love and kindness with which they were treated.' Is not that a rather wonderful sort of kitchen-boy to possess?

Nevertheless, I do not pretend that they have not other qualities, the failings and foibles of children, as in many respects they are. They are, for instance, so fond of wearing any old clothes on which they can lay their hands that I generally burn my old caps; but the other day, being in a hurry, I threw one all crumpled up into my waste-paper basket. The next day, when the pack-horses arrived with provisions from Apia, you may fancy our laughter when one of

the boys appeared proudly decorated with my cap! He evidently thinks it very fine, as he has worn it ever since, and is so pleased with his adornment that we have not had the heart to interfere.

The new house is now very nearly done, so far, at least, as the main building work is concerned. The fine hall will be a delightful place, 48 feet long by 38 feet wide; at first only the under part of the stair was to be open, but now it is to be open all the way up, and the effect will be very good. In spite of much yet to be done, the rooms will soon be usable; and Belle is determined 'fither or no'' to move in from Pine-apple Cottage before the rains fairly begin, so as to avoid the soaking that even that very short journey frequently entails.

December 29.

CHRISTMAS past, and the New Year very close at hand! And my packing still not half done!! I had to go to Apia one day, and was decidedly the worse of my excursion; could not sleep for coughing, and felt miserably ill and weak. We sent to the doctor for medicine, which Lou has already had and liked, and it relieved me greatly; but it is very annoying to be so ill and useless just when I am starting home, and have so much to do. If I had only started in November, as I first intended, I should have been all right.

Well, the 'hall' was finished in a temporary way in time for the Tree, which we had on Monday the 26th; and the lower flight of the new stairs was ready too, which proved, as you will hear, a great convenience. We had very few white guests, as some of our friends were away from home; only Mrs. F—— and her daughter, and Mr. and Mrs. G——, besides all the members of our household and their relatives. The tree, you must know, had taken quite a lot of ingenious contriving; it consisted of a post fixed in a solid foundation, and pierced with holes through which were stuck branches of the 'ironwood.' This is distinctly like fir, at least in its foliage; and the effect was capital, and gave one a strange sensation so far from home.

The post, lest it should be seen between the branches, was thickly covered with scarlet hibiscus blooms, which looked lovely in themselves; and of course there were plenty of lights and bright things, which made a very gay and pretty effect.

As usual, the guests arrived early, and about our dinner-time a message was brought in that twenty-two people were waiting to be fed! So you see one has to be prepared for sudden demands on the larder here on any, and I might almost say *every*, occasion. By seven o'clock it was dark enough to light up, and when we had taken our places on the new stairs, which made a splendid 'dress circle' for the occasion, the

THE NEW HALL—VAILIMA

gong was sounded, and the rest trooped in and sat down upon the floor. Lloyd began to cut down the gifts and distribute them, with little jokes that were hugely appreciated; but which, being in Samoan, conveyed nothing to me. There was something for every one. Mrs. F—— is deeply interested in ornithology, so she got a squeaking bird, carefully labelled with the fine Latin name of a *dodo*; and Miss F—— had a neat little packet of imaginary love-letters full of most amusing allusions. But the excitement of the boys over their gifts was really touching. One called Missi Folo, who has been working very well lately, and deserved a reward, got a knife, which delighted him very much; but when by and by a concertina also was handed to him, he just stood up and *gasped*, his eyes blazing with joy, and yet scarcely able to believe in his good fortune. I never saw more intense and simple happiness in all my life; and when 'the party' was over I could not help saying, 'Well, I must confess, Lou really does his best to act up to his own gospel, that while it is our duty to be good ourselves, our duty to our neighbour is to make him happy!'

December 31.

ONE last story of Vailima before I close. As the F——s had been again forced to take refuge with us, Lou and Fanny moved into the new house to make room; so that it is

occupied, if not finished, before my departure—quicker work than we had dared to hope for. Sosimo was helping with the flitting, and when the work was over Louis sat down to rest, and sighed for a cigarette, without feeling sufficiently energetic either to go or send for tobacco. At that very moment Sosimo appeared with all that Louis had just been longing for. *Quel e le potu*, said Lou gratefully, *How great is the wisdom!* and he was deeply touched with the quick reply, *How great is the love!*

My cough is still bad, and I feel very far from well. Some days I have been forbidden to speak at all, and have been known in the family as 'The Silent Woman'; but I have no doubt the voyage will set me up. At any rate the excitement of departure will act as a stimulus, I hope, and get me safely off, and the rest I leave to Providence. And that seems, surely, a good word wherewith to close!

S.S. 'Lübeck,' January 1893.

I SHALL write this to post at Sydney, and you may take it as the last of this series of letters; as henceforward my fortnightly epistles will be of a short and commonplace nature, and if anything very interesting happens, you must live in hope—until we meet!—for further details.

I don't in the least remember how I finished my last letter; my head was in such a whirl,

what with weakness, want of sleep, and the bustle of departure, that it all seems like a very confused dream. At any rate, it was about 5 P.M. on Saturday (Hogmanay) when, after having given the boys their parting gift of a *lava-lava* and a half-dollar each, Fanny and I set out for Apia, and I said good-bye, with rather a heavy heart, to Vailima. Louis had gone on before us; but when we met again at Mr. H——'s house we were distressed to find him very far from well, and evidently in for a severe cold. He wanted to ride home after dinner, but we persuaded him to stay in town till next day; the night air in the bush is often dangerous, especially during, or soon after, damp weather. At 12 P.M. I was awakened by a tremendous din, and at first could not think what it might be; till I suddenly remembered that '93 had just come in, and the *Lübeck* was firing her guns, and sending up rockets in honour of the 'little stranger.' I would have liked to go straight to Lou and wish him the 'luck o' the year'; but I was afraid to venture, on the chance—a very remote one, as it seemed to me! —that he was not awake. In the morning I was very glad I had been so prudent, as he actually slept right through the whole racket! Unfortunately he was no better, and his cold was so heavy that we felt it would not be safe for him to stay and see me off; so as soon as breakfast was over we sent him home, with

orders to put himself straight to bed. It was rather an anxious parting, for me!

At eleven o'clock we came off to the *Lübeck* in Mr. H——'s boat, with its smart crew looking very nice in their scarlet *lava-lavas* and white shirts. The first person I met on board was the doctor from Apia, and you may imagine my surprise when he quietly informed me that I had just come through a moderately severe attack of influenza! and might be very thankful I had not been worse. It seems that many people in Apia are down with it, and the German consul is so weak that he cannot stand upright. No wonder I felt so sick and useless, and so unlike an ordinary 'colded' condition; and oh! I do hope Lou won't have it badly. Of course, I shall be exceedingly anxious till I hear how he is.

My party soon went on shore, but I had several visitors who came off to say good-bye, bringing me quantities of flowers and fruit; Mrs. C—— in particular gave me a basket full of the lovely crimson hibiscus that she knew I am so fond of. I said to her, 'There are just two things I cannot realise just now: one, that this is New Year's Day; the other, that it is Sunday.' I had scarcely made the remark when I was informed that it was neither. The *Lübeck* keeps Australian time, while Samoa, as I told you a while ago, reckons by San Francisco; so, although in politeness she saluted the Samoan

New Year, as soon as we stepped on the *Lübeck*'s deck we found ourselves in Monday, the 2nd of January. It was an odd and rather topsy-turvy experience.

I am very comfortable, and rather thankful that there are at present only two other passengers; so that there are no calls on my politeness, and I can give myself conscientiously over to getting well again. It is very hot, and we get little air, as the wind is behind us. I spend most of the time on the upper deck under the awning, and sleep a great deal. No doubt the heat, and the weakness, for I still feel thoroughly pulled down, are the cause of my drowsiness; and I feel sure that such a thorough rest will soon put me all right.

On Thursday morning we had a very exciting episode . . . to me, at least; though it is not an uncommon one, of course, at sea. About 3 A.M. I heard a great shouting and running about, and hurried out of my cabin to see what had happened. It was a 'man overboard.' . . . The ship was stopped and a boat lowered very quickly, and it began to make a circuit in the direction in which he had been last seen; but to us on deck he was quite invisible, and as some one reported that he could not swim, there seemed little chance of saving him in that waste of waters—not to speak of sharks. The *Lübeck* began to move round to meet the boat, and I felt very sick at heart and gave up all hope.

I was just going below to avoid the pain of seeing them return, unsuccessful, when Peters, my cabin-steward, rushed up to me and cried, 'They've got him, they've got him! he's just got into the boat!' And sure enough, when I looked again, there was an extra man sitting quietly with the others as if nothing had happened. I could not help waving my handkerchief in token of welcome as they drew near, but that was positively the only symptom of rejoicing that a life had been spared. The man helped to pull the boat up, and stepped on board as if he had been out on ordinary duty, and not one of his companions shook hands with him, or raised the vestige of a cheer. It seemed incomprehensible to me, and I longed to have my Vailima bell, and call out *Lotu, lotu*. . . .

When I spoke to the captain about it later, he declared that it does not do to make these pranks too agreeable, or they may occur oftener than is desirable! and added, 'The man may consider himself lucky that he has not been punished for his carelessness,' — I suppose in tumbling overboard. It appears that he *can* swim, and his only, or chief, danger was from sharks, as the captain had him in sight all the time from the bridge, and was directing the boat. It did not take more than fifteen minutes altogether, and was very exciting; and fortunately, . . . *all's well that ends well.*

Yesterday, the 10th, we had a fine view of

Lord Howe's Island, which is really very impressive. At first it is seen rising out of the water like an enormous Bell Rock Lighthouse—a very unromantic comparison, but it was forcibly suggested to my mind; later on it widened out, and finished in two grand peaks, round the base of which are piled a profusion of extraordinary rocks that are shaped like sea-lions and other strange monsters of the deep, and seem to guard the island from approach. Truly, they look forbidding enough to incline one to keep at a safe distance. . . .

Sydney, January 15, 1892.

ARRIVED safe and well; and good news from my dear people at Vailima. They are all better, and Louis is coming over in the next boat, with Fanny and Belle. I am so glad, for it was doubly hard to leave him when he looked so ill; whereas once I have seen him, as I hope, completely set up by the voyage, I shall be able to set out with an easy mind on my long journey towards home . . . and you!

PART II

AFTER a year's happy stay in Scotland, Mrs. Stevenson started on her return to Samoa in April 1894. The letters written at sea are omitted, as they practically repeat those of her earlier voyage; while from her Australian correspondence only such extracts are given as seem to have interest in themselves, or that lead up to her arrival in Apia.

To explain some allusions it must be added that since she had left the island Samoa had passed into a state of serious unrest; the home papers were full of threatening rumours, and the latest news before she sailed was far from reassuring. In fact, it was not till she fairly landed at Apia that she knew whether she was to find there peace or war; as she herself says, an armed and guarded hotel, or a free and open road home to Vailima. But her anxiety was tempered by her knowledge of the tendency of public rumour to exaggerate, and by her confidence in the Samoan's love for Tusitala.

Sydney, May 20, 1894.

HERE we are once more in our old quarters, with the first part of our long voyage safely at an end. We landed at Adelaide on Monday, a lovely bright day, though cold after the tropics; everything was brilliantly green and refreshing to the eye after so many weeks of sun and sea and sky. On Wednesday morning at 4 A.M. I was wakened by the anchor dropping at Melbourne; there was little more sleep to be had, and before long we were all ordered to get up and make ready for the sanitary officer's inspection. We had a long day on shore, seeing many friends; and in the evening we returned on board and started for Sydney. I was very glad to get here; it seemed quite homelike to be recognised and remembered, and to find myself among 'kent fouk.' You know I am not alone; without counting G——, who will soon be off to New Zealand, Miss B——[1] is here also, which I find exceedingly pleasant. She and I think of going together to the Blue Mountains, and expect to start on Wednesday.

Mount Victoria, May 26.

AS the train which is to take us on to Katoomba does not start for two hours, I am filling up the time by writing to you. We came

[1] Mr. Graham Balfour had come out with Mrs. Stevenson and intended to revisit Samoa; Miss B—— was a very pleasant and much-appreciated fellow-passenger.—ED.

here on Wednesday, and found the hotel very comfortable; but the cold was great, which was not astonishing, as we had ascended three thousand three hundred feet in three hours and a half. On Thursday morning we started in an open conveyance, wrapped in every warm 'hap' that we possessed; mercifully the wind had gone down since the day before, so we just managed to endure the keen air without too much discomfort. We drove thirty-six miles through the Blue Mountains, and I cannot imagine anything much more lovely; the views on every side were charming, and I could not get over the splendour of the foliage in midwinter. When I remarked on this to our driver, he said, 'We'd be thankful to see the leaves drop; we get sick of these everlasting, unchanging Blue Gums!' The air is deliciously aromatic, and though cold, it becomes hot the instant the sun shines out.

We lunched at a halfway house, and reached our bourne, the Jenolan Caves, at 3 P.M.; and though we meekly confessed to being pretty tired, we were at once ordered off to visit one of them. We had to take off our good dresses and get the loan of dirty old clothes; Miss B—— wore a pyjama suit, and made a very nice boy, but I absolutely declined to go to that length of juvenility. In consequence I was enveloped in a dreadful skirt that made me look like some disreputable old charwoman. (As I wrote the

above Miss B—— broke in with, 'Oh, much worse than that! you looked like one of those beggar-women on the street, for your skirt was pinned over the wrong way and displayed the "spare," bound with rusty black, not to speak of quite twelve inches deep of yellow mud all round the bottom!' I said, 'Why did you let me go such a figure?' And she calmly replied, 'Because if *I* had to go in trousers, I was determined that *you* should not look too respectable!' You must bear in mind that we were accompanied by two very nice young men, students, who were travelling round the world, and looked as spick and span as we were . . . otherwise. I am not sure that I don't regret the pyjama suit after all; it couldn't have been worse!)

The cave was certainly most beautiful, with every variety of wonderful things in it; cathedral arches, vaulted and fretted roofs, and lovely little shrines that only lacked a statue to make them quite complete. There were statues too, and no mean ones, but unluckily none in quite the right places. One figure was extraordinarily like the Madonna with the Child in her arms; indeed, this cave used to be called the Madonna Cave, but, as the guide quietly observed, 'when Lord Carrington came here they thought more of him than of the Madonna, so now it is called the Carrington Cave!' In one place there is a stretch of rock known as The Shawls; it looks like the finest Shetland knitting, with striped

borders. You can actually see the ridges, and I had to feel it to convince myself it was not real wool. I believe the coloured stripes are made by iron in the rock. It was really hard work going through the cave; we climbed up and down steep stairs and had frequently to stoop nearly double, while twice over we had to crawl some distance on hands and knees. At these parts Miss B—— (who was behind me) declares that she lay down on the ground and wept with delight over the picture I presented, and the groans that escaped from me! I assure you, however, that in the end I was thankful even for the beggar's skirt, when I discovered how my petticoat was torn into ribbons by such usage. It took us two and a half hours to go through, which, after a mountain drive of thirty-six miles, is really not bad for the old lady, you 'll agree. . . . We were both dreadfully tired when it was over, but a good night's rest quite set us up again.

Yesterday we ought by rights to have visited three more caves, but I thought I should do very well if I achieved only one. So we took the advice of the young men who had gone with us the day before; and as they warned us that the largest cave, called the Lucas, is hard work and very fatiguing, we decided to content ourselves with the Right Imperial. We enjoyed it very much; some of the effects were even more striking than in the cave we had already

visited, and there were some particularly beautiful 'minarets' and cloisters. It is a very fine sight, all lit up by electric light; and one realises what ages must have gone to the formation of these labyrinths, when recent scientific observation declares that it takes one hundred years to deposit the thickness of an egg-shell. . . .

June 2.

AT Katoomba we spent a very pleasant Sunday and found some nice people. There were tremendously high waterfalls, too, but owing to the dry weather they had shrunk to very small proportions; and we had only a poor view of them from above, as I declined to venture down the almost precipitous paths. The way in which the land falls away from these great cliffs is very remarkable; the valley is filled with great wooded *billows*—I can find no better word—on which the play of light and shade is wonderful. The vegetation, of course, is very rich, and all along the streams there is a splendid growth of ferns, with quantities of maidenhair; and whether it be from the eucalyptus foliage or not, the Blue Mountains are certainly very beautifully blue, though quite different in tone to our 'purple hills' in Scotland. I was interested to be told by an artist that the tint is actually different in composition, much colder, and more of an *indigo*, so it is not a matter of individual opinion only.

Since we have got back I have been 'seeing the sights' of Sydney as I never did before, and enjoying them greatly. To-day, after church, I went into the public gardens to admire the camelias and other flowers; and coming home through the Domain I found the usual speechifying, of which I wrote to you on my first visit, going on. In fact, I thought it had grown even a little more various! I listened for a while to two who preached the Gospel to the best, no doubt, of their ability; a third, who inveighed against a proposed tax on buildings; a fourth (and he had the largest crowd of all), attacking the government for allowing two men to be hanged yesterday; a fifth, lecturing in favour of total abstinence; and a sixth who upheld what he called 'conditional immortality.' I have no doubt I could have largely added to this list, as there were plenty others; but by this time my interest—and my legs—gave out.

I had a letter from Lou last week in which he said he thought the war was at an end, but I was distressed to see in the papers yesterday that the New Zealand steamer had brought news of a renewal of the fighting. I am afraid they are not likely to be misinformed, but I will not let myself believe it altogether. Louis told me he had gone on board the *Curaçoa* and asked the captain if he thought it quite safe for me to come; to which he received the cheerful reply, 'Oh yes, because if there is any danger,

I shall put all the ladies in one of the hotels, and send the marines ashore to guard them!' I don't at all like the prospect of living in the midst of war, so I sincerely trust it may be at an end before I reach Samoa. But, as you know, I cannot bring myself to believe that Lou, or any of his folk, will be in serious danger from the natives.

June 10.

I SAIL for Samoa to-morrow at 4 P.M., and have still much to see to before I leave. I was greatly surprised when Lou said in his last letter, 'No word of the furniture[1] yet.' Thinking something must be far wrong, I set out to make inquiries, and at last discovered that it had been lying here *since January*, in a bonded warehouse, for which attention I have to pay heavily! I can't understand about it, no one seems to have written to any agent to see it through. Now I am arranging that it is to go in the same boat with me, but I fear it will be a very expensive luxury before it reaches Vailima. And I am beginning to wonder, if we arrive in the midst of war, what we are going to do with it when we get there!

[1] Mrs. Stevenson had despatched to Samoa the furniture of her house in Heriot Row some months before her own departure.—ED.

S.S. 'Monowai,' June 13.

HOW pleasant it is to feel myself fairly on the way to rejoin my dear boy . . . and with the furniture, so to speak, in my pocket, too! I am still triumphant in getting it off under my own eyes; the people made lots of difficulties, but . . . here it is! Now we have settled down to the usual amenities of a fine voyage, with nothing to tell that I have not often told you before. We have pleasant fellow-passengers, a nice captain, and much warmer weather already, at which I rejoice. . . .

At Auckland we picked up Lloyd, but G—— had already tired of New Zealand, and gone on to Samoa; and as soon as we started once more, we came out into a regular storm, which has continued for several days. The sea is very high, with splendid waves washing over the deck continually, and pouring down into alley-ways and every open space; there were three feet of water in the captain's cabin, I hear, somewhere about 3 A.M. this morning! Meanwhile I have the place to myself, no other ladies are visible, and few men. I must confess walking is neither easy nor dignified; and between you and me and the post, I came down the companion stairs to-day (no one being in sight), in the way children love, sitting and sliding from step to step!

Poor Lloyd is one of the victims, and as he

has another man in his cabin, I cannot go and visit him; but I think he is not very bad. By the way, I seized the first opportunity to ask *him* about the furniture, but found myself none the wiser; he 'thought some one had been written to,' but I suspect my unpractical children of having forgotten all about it! it is a good thing I am going back to look after them. . . .

June 20.

THE storm moderated soon after I last wrote, though the sea still remained very high; however, the captain relieved us by saying he would not *now* have to beat about till the wind went down, but could go straight into harbour when we reach Apia early to-morrow. I wonder what we shall find: war and a guarded hotel, or peace and an open road to Vailima? You are probably wiser and better informed at this moment than I. That is the worst of sea-voyages, but this one of mine has at last come to an end.

Vailima, June 24, 1894.

HOME at last! We reached Apia at 8.30 A.M. on Thursday 21st. It was a lovely morning, and everything was looking its very best; it quite warmed my heart to hear how all the passengers admired it, and how many envied me the privilege of living there. But when the boat came off, I was sorely disap-

pointed to see neither Louis nor Fanny in it; poor Lou had a cold and was still in his room, so, of course, had not been able to get down. Then, too, Mr. H—— was ill, and could not come for me in his fine boat, so my arrival was shorn of its glory. With as little delay as possible I mounted and set off for Vailima; it seemed strange to find the road so altered that I scarcely recognised it. In some ways it is improved, as a tolerably good road now comes to within a mile of us; and at one point the clearing of the bush opens out a very fine view of wooded hills, that might well be in Scotland. I fancy it is only the *change* I object to, I had looked forward to every step of the way home being so familiar.

Vailima itself, however, looked very homelike, especially when Louis met me on the verandah. He is a good deal pulled down by this cold, which has been a severe one, and looks fagged and weak; but they all tell me he is very much better, and Fanny (who has been ill too) is much more nearly herself again than I expected, which is a comfort. But the main thing is, that here I am with my dear children once more; and I find it hard to realise that I have been a year at home with you. All the more so, as I am still in my old room; the new one can't be occupied till the furniture arrives, and at present I suppose it is reposing somewhere on 'the beach.' That furniture is the talk of the town. The middies

declare that such cases, for size, were never seen in Apia before, and that when the largest was brought ashore, the majority of the population were gathered round to watch, and saluted it with cheers! We hope the German firm will bring it up this week, but Fanny is going down to-morrow morning to make definite arrangements.

And in the meantime, what can I tell you about Samoan affairs? The two parties are still armed, and camping out in the bush, which must be very bad for them, poor bodies, in the wet weather they have had here lately; but you need have no fears about us, we are far from the disturbed district, and really hear little or nothing of what goes on unless a wounded man is brought into hospital. What is most to be feared is the risk of famine, as a great deal of food has been destroyed, principally, I believe, by the royal troops. Already coconuts, *taro*, etc., are being stolen in the close neighbourhood of Apia, but I am glad to say that no one has laid hands as yet on anything belonging to Tusitala. Lou hoped that the Admiral's visit might have had a good result, but he seems very anxious to keep clear of Samoan affairs—perhaps has been instructed to do so, officially. At any rate (and if not true, it's a good story and not unlikely) we heard that a certain Foreign Office official, after reading Lou's letter to the *Times*, wrung his hands and said, 'I'm sure I wish they would give him Samoa, and let him do what he likes with it!'

July 1.

WE have had a week of hard work. The furniture was brought up on Monday and Tuesday; the German firm undertook the job and managed it splendidly. They used twelve carts with two bullocks to each, and at the bad parts of the road had a lot of black boys ready to 'push behind.' The weather was showery and threatening, so we had to unpack all the thirty-eight cases as fast as we could, and get the things either indoors, or at least on to the verandah; so you may fancy the resulting chaos. However, it was all unpacked by Tuesday night, by dint of a little help from friendly callers added to our own exertions. Since Wednesday Lloyd and G—— have been hanging pictures; and by now the hall is in order and looks remarkably well. The twelve best pictures are there; and the Heriot Row dining-room furniture suits the proportions of the room very well, and is most effective. We have cleared the verandah also, and feel that we have got through a lot of work; but of course much remains to be done. I am thankful to say that the furniture has been very well packed, and has arrived in very good order; much better, indeed, than I had dared to hope. Naturally a good deal of crockery has come to grief, and it is heartrending to me to see the heap of broken familiar things constantly increasing in size; but I can't complain when so much has come safely.

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July 8.

I HAVE just taken possession of my new room, and find it exceedingly comfortable, though as yet it is all in a great mess. There is one novelty about it that ought to prove a comfort, the windows and doors are closed in with wire gauze, so that it is 'insect proof,' and I can sleep without a mosquito-net. Moreover, I hope that horrid creature, the mason-bee, won't be able to get in to my books, and spoil them. I was rather afraid that I might find it hot and airless, especially at night, but there seems to be a very good draught of air right through, and so far it is most comfortable.

Last week was a very gay one. On Tuesday the captain and officers of the *Curaçoa* gave a capital ball. On Wednesday two of the sailors called at Vailima, and the spokesman announced that 'me and my messmates were to give a ball that evening' in the very same ''all,' and requesting the honour of our company. Louis and Belle went, and declare it was even more successful than the other; the men behaved so well, and danced better than the officers! There is a very good feeling on board, and both officers and men speak so nicely of each other. Then the German firm gave a grand entertainment called a *Blumen Corso*, or flower fête, the sort of thing that is known as a *Bataille de fleurs* in the south of France. All the horses and carriages (mostly of

the buggy nature) were beautifully decorated, and bouquets were thrown, just as they do at Nice and Mentone, etc.; but here the beauty of the flowers gave a certain tropical character to the scene that was delightful. It was carried out with true tropical vigour, too; for, whatever may be said in regard to work, there is no place so energetic as the South Sea Islands for amusement; and what with procession, battle of flowers, sports and dancing, this entertainment lasted for twelve full hours! Then the flagship came in, and of course the Admiral had to be called upon, and the officers entertained here; and a yacht with some very pleasant people on board also arrived in the bay, and they called here; and the first circular trip from New Zealand brought quite a lot more visitors, and visits to return in consequence. After all that merely suggested you won't be surprised to hear that Lou came back from Apia yesterday fairly fagged out, but rather think, as I do, that being able to do so much when barely recovered from a severe cold speaks well for his strength. . . .

July 17.

I MUST not forget to tell you that as Faalé, who was to have been my maid, was married to a native pastor just before my return, I am now busy searching for a *boy* to fill her place. It seems odd, but I think may work very well; as many people say that the men here are far

more reliable and *trainable* than the women. By the way, Louis and King Malietoa are once more on friendly terms. It has come about this way, so far as I can make out: one of Mataafa's chiefs was recently in the Apia prison, a horrid, close, dirty place, where prisoners are almost entirely dependent on their friends for food. Louis knew the discomforts, and in order to get Poé, the chief aforesaid, out, became cautioner for him to the extent of a hundred dollars that he would not rejoin the rebels. Somehow this seems to have been taken as a friendly act to the 'reigning king'; and the result is that cold shoulder has turned to gracious welcome, and we are once more friendly with the palace.

Vailima, July 22, 1894.

I HAVE been quite gay (for me!) this week, having been at no less than two entertainments. On Thursday we lunched on board the *Curaçoa*, and thoroughly enjoyed it; and yesterday we were invited by Seumano and Faatulia, the chief and chiefess of Apia, to a native feast or picnic at Papaloloa, the bathing-pool on the Vaisigano river, of which I sent you a photo. I used to wonder if they really did jump down from so great a height. Now, I can tell you for a fact that they *do*, since I have seen it with my own eyes; and, what is more, they all, even the pretty Samoan girls, enjoyed it thoroughly. *I* should not care to do it; but then I am neither

Samoan nor young—nor, to complete the comparison, pretty! They all took the jump feet first; but I noticed that when the younger *Curaçoa* officers (who had also been invited) joined in the fun, *they* took it head foremost. I must say the middies were in no way outdone by the Samoans; they dived splendidly, turning somersaults in the air, and they seemed thoroughly at home in the water. After the bathing followed lunch: a splendid Samoan feast, with no end of pigs, chickens, pigeons, crayfish, prawns, and so on, and quantities of bread-fruit, *taro*, and coconuts both to eat and drink, in many forms and preparations. The entertainment wound up with a Samoan and European dance. I told you parties here lasted the round of the clock—which some of our party stayed to enjoy; but I found the daylight portion enough for me, and was glad to get home and rest. There was one little incident that was interesting. While lunch was going on we were rather alarmed to see a lot of armed soldiers in the wood just above us. Fortunately, on investigation, they proved to be friendly, and Seumano sent them a pig as their share of their feast; but it was a rather sharp reminder of the unseen strife so near to us, of which we hear so little that at times we almost forget its existence.

July 29.

OUR household, including the stranger within the gates, has been largely augmented of late. We have a visitor, the master of marines from the *Curaçoa*; there has been a good deal of sickness on board lately, and Louis suggested that one of the invalids might be sent to Vailima for change of air. We are fortunate in the choice, and like him very much. Then I have a boy of my own now; he comes from the Catholic mission, and is called Kapélé, which is Samoan for Gabriel; he takes well to his work, cleans my room, attends to my horse, besides doing weeding, and so on, in his spare time. He already knows a few words of English, and seems anxious to pick up more, so I am relieved from my dread of finding myself helpless, with no 'common tongue' to give my orders in. Last, but not least, four little calves have appeared on the scene, and very much in sight too, as they are tethered close to the house; so that, as Lloyd puts it, 'the place resounds with the cries of veal in all its stages.' I must not forget to tell you how Lafaële brought the news of the safe arrival of one of them to Fanny: it was to the effect that the 'black cow had got a sow'! I can't explain the confusion of ideas, but it means a heifer! Two little 'sows' are to be kept for the 'herd,' and are being fed with bottles; it is very amusing to watch, and the little things are as tame as can be already.

We have heard rumours of war lately, but I do not think there has been any actual fighting, though *that* is by no means the only, or the least, danger. Lou has hard work to keep our boys at home; both Talolo and Sosimo were called out, but Talolo was quite decided not to go. Sosimo was more unsettled, and was very nearly talked over by his father; and as he has something wrong with his heart, and the doctor had said that exposure to damp and the night air in the bush would be sure to kill him, Lou was of course very anxious to keep him at home. He had a long interview with the father, but at first it seemed no use; till suddenly he had a bright idea, and appealed to the judgment of Solomon, saying—

'Who is the true father of this boy, you who wish to send him where he may be killed by the sword or die of exposure in the woods, or I, who wish to save his life by keeping him safe at home?'

The father hung down his head, and replied, 'It is true; I cannot resist your parable.'

It really was a happy thought, as the form and substance were more convincing to a native than any other argument could have been. And we are greatly relieved; for there are far, far more than those who fall by sword or bullet who go out to the woods and never return. The damp and the night air are more than such a sun-warmed people can stand.

August 5.

WE have had some interesting native visitors this week.

On Sunday forenoon a young chief called Tui arrived with his 'talking-man'; Louis had been the means of persuading him to join Malietoa's side when Mataafa was deported, and resistance became no more than rebellion. They dined with us, and afterwards had a long talk with Lou about Samoan affairs; and at evening *lotu* Tui gave a prayer in Samoan, while Louis followed in English.

The next day an old chief from the other side of the island came to Vailima with his 'talking-man'; he too had a long consultation with Tusitala, and stayed to lunch.

On Tuesday morning, immediately after breakfast, not one chief, but a war-party appeared, having come from Safata across the island; there were sixteen men with muskets, and two women, who carry the cartridges and hand them out when fighting is going on. They brought Tusitala a gift of a white bullock for drawing a waggon; and they were also accompanied by a mare with her foal, because, as they explained, she was 'a friend of the bullock's,' and he would follow wherever she led. They went on to beg that they might leave the mare and foal with us until they were able to come back and fetch them; and as they live close to the seat of war,

I have no doubt this was the real object of their visit. It is no wonder they wanted to feel sure that the beasts were safe and well out of the way. Before our visitors left us we had the usual *kava*-drinking, and it was even more picturesque, I thought, than usual. A large mat was spread on the verandah, and we sat on one side, facing the principal members of the party on the other; many complimentary speeches were made according to custom, Lloyd acting as our 'talking-man.' The *kava* was then handed to each side alternately in proper precedence; Tusitala, as the host and chief, is always helped first, for there is, you know, no special precedence accorded to ladies in Samoa. . . . And then our guests left us. Poor things! I wonder how many of them we shall ever see again?

August 7.

THERE is more actual fighting going on just now than there has been since I came back. The three men-o'-war went up the coast on Friday, and on Saturday they shelled a fort and destroyed it completely; the people had been warned to clear out, so no lives were lost then, but yesterday there was more firing, and two wounded men were brought into hospital. There is no saying how many more there may be, of course, as yet. I am truly sorry for Mr. and Mrs. C——, whose little hospital has been open now for a whole year, and has only once in

that time (and then but for a fortnight) been unoccupied. It is very hard work to carry it on alone, and they both begin to look thoroughly fagged out with such a long strain and so much extra labour over and above their ordinary work. And yet no one has the least idea when it may come to an end.

And now I 'll wind up with an anecdote very redolent of 'the beach.' We recently had a visit from a new arrival here, an American, an enthusiastic admirer of 'Stevenson.' He held Lou's hand for a long time when he was introduced, and told him how much he admired him and all his books; and went on to explain that his reason for coming to Samoa was just because R. L. S. was there. 'You know,' he continued, 'the nearer you get to Samoa the larger he looms. He looms very large from Honolulu; and when we got here, and a boat came off to us, the first question we asked was, "War still going on?"

'"Yes."

'"Any other news?"

'"Oh! Mr. Stevenson got by last mail the d——dest lot of furniture that has ever been seen in Samoa!!"'

Vailima, August 19.

THERE were so many contradictory rumours about the war—some far from reassuring—that we could not tell how things were going, and Louis planned to go up the coast and

investigate for himself. However, he was told that he would do well to stay at home and look after his own affairs, as the Atua people had threatened to attack Vailima because Lou had persuaded Tui to desert them. We don't know whether there was any truth in this, but anyway Louis stayed at home, and Vailima is very well, thank you, up to date. The *Curaçoa* shelled a fort, and also the rebel position a few miles from here, and the chiefs surrendered and gave up about a hundred rifles. None of the chiefs were put in prison, which seems a good sign, and makes us hope we may look upon it as the beginning of the end. . . .

On Thursday Louis joined the *Curaçoa*, which was going away to coal at Pango-pango, on the island of Tutuila; he has never quite got over the cold he had when I arrived, and the little change, he thought, would do him good. The *Curaçoa* was delayed, as it happened, by the non-arrival of the New Zealand steamer; and we were much amused when Lou came up 'on leave' to pay us a polite visit! His 'leave' was up at 3.30 to-day, so he is off again. He tells us that when on board he is rated as 'youngest midshipman'!

August 26.

I HAVE had a busy week since I last wrote. In the first place Fanny was not feeling well, and we thought a little change would do

her good too; so she and I went down to the Tivoli Hotel in Apia on Monday. We got two nice rooms opening into one another, and took our meals on the verandah; it is twenty feet wide, with delightful views of sea and mountain, and a more charming sort of 'parlour' could not be imagined. We had plenty of society, too, as several people we know are staying at the Tivoli just now; but Fanny found that she had taken influenza, so she refuses to return home till the doctor says there is no fear of infection for Louis. I am sorry to say there is a good deal of sickness in Apia just now.

I was invited to go to the opening of the new school at Leulumoenga, but as there was no room for me in the H——s' house there, it was arranged that I should go with Mrs. C—— (whose husband could not leave the wounded in the hospital at Apia) to stay for the night at Malua. So on Wednesday morning we started in the Mission boat, with twelve rowers and a steersman belonging to Mr. C——'s school; they sang nearly the whole way, and I often wish I were musical enough to appreciate these quaint and touching melodies. Three large boats had gone before us, laden with the seventy girls from Papauta and their teacher; and we all met at Malua, where the M——s welcomed us as kindly as ever. Early on Thursday morning we went on to Leulumoenga, where a very large party was already assembled. The new

schoolhouse is a fine large hall, with twenty doors and windows, but it was packed to overflowing. It was quite a pretty sight: the native pastors and students were all clothed in white, the Papauta girls also wore white, with wreaths of moss in their hair; and the pupils from the other Mission-houses each wore different distinguishing colours. There must have been fully six hundred people in the hall, not counting the crowds outside. In the forenoon there was a thanksgiving service, and a few particulars were given, in an address, of the building of the school, which was designed by Mr. H——, and put up by the boys themselves under his superintendence and guidance. After this we had dinner and a rest, while the food-gifts were being apportioned and distributed; my share was a barrel of beef! . . . which, as I was one of the C——'s family for the nonce, I handed over to their boys.

At 3 P.M. we went back to the schoolhouse and heard the boys examined; it was all in English, which they speak remarkably well, and I was greatly struck with the improvement since I was here two years ago. It was amusing to hear one boy sing 'Oh dear, what can the matter be!' and sing it, too, in very good time and tune; and at the end they all joined most enthusiastically in 'God save the Queen.' Then we betook ourselves to our boats again, and had just time to get back to Malua before it was

dark. Next day we returned to Apia, but as the wind was against us, we took no less than four hours to row the distance which, going, we had covered in about two. It did not seem long, however, as besides ourselves there were the three Papauta boats and one from Savaii, belonging to Mr. H——, the missionary there; and of course our crews had to try races, in which we invariably beat the others, and ultimately got home ahead of them.

There was one curious thing about this little festival, it took place in the heart of the war district; the king's troops were on one side of us, and the rebels on the other. The new American consul said he had never heard of a picnic under such conditions;[1] but both sides are friendly to the missions, and the royal troops kept out of the way on purpose to avoid any difficulties. The rebels did come down to see if the enemy were about, but finding none, they got a present of food and fruit and went away well content. The H——s distributed nearly a hundred pigs and fifty-two barrels of beef, and it is rather curious how they were able to get such supplies together in a time of scarcity. The people living round Leulumoenga told the schoolboys that owing to the war they were unable to make *copra* of their coconuts;

[1] The editor remembers a picnic some miles out of Auckland during the Maori war, when blackberry-picking (the cause of the expedition) had to be carried out within a circle of armed guards.

so if the boys liked to gather them and make the *copra*, they were welcome to sell it and do what they liked with the proceeds. The money so obtained was a real boon, as it purchased a large quantity of food, enough to feed the multitude present, and to give them plenty of beef and pigs to carry home; and as many have been on short commons of late, I am sure it must have been exceedingly welcome.

On Saturday I came home and found Lou back from the *Curaçoa*, and looking better than he has done since I returned, in fact quite young and cheerful, and able, we hope, to do a little work. But I feel Fanny is right to stay in Apia till the doctor pronounces her free from infection; and, by the way, the Apia doctor has had an accident while away on a *malanga*, and is not yet able to return home. How things would have got on but for Dr. H—— of the *Curaçoa*, I can't imagine; for there is a good deal of sickness about just now, and there are always wounded in the hospital. Indeed I believe Dr. H—— has been very hard worked; but fortunately, as the *Curaçoa* carries two medical men, she can always leave one behind if necessary, even when she goes away on a trip.

I missed a very interesting scene, which took place the other day during my absence. Ten chiefs, who have been in prison in Apia ever since Mataafa was overcome, were lately set at

liberty; and as Louis had been kind to them, going to visit them occasionally and sending them food, tobacco, and so on, they came up in a body to thank him. Not content with this, they offered to make the road for him, from our house to where the path joins the public road; and when Lou tried to put them off, not wishing to take them at their word, they insisted on their offer. He proposed then that he should feed them while they were at work; but even this they refused, saying they wished to do it all themselves, as a *mea-alofa* (gift of love) to Tusitala, who had always been the Samoans' friend. And yet there are people who say they have no gratitude! They were taken round the house, which all natives like to see, and when they came to my room they said they were sorry they had not seen me; and one chief took off his wreath of sweet-scented flowers and seeds and hung it round my picture, where I found it on my return.

September 2.

GOOD news at last, the war is at an end for the present, and we are most thankful. The *Curaçoa* and one of the German warships went up to Aava, and after some negotiations Tamasese agreed to 'do homage' to Malietoa, and surrendered a large quantity of muskets. It was really to the Powers he yielded and not to Malietoa; so it is doubtful if the

peace would last long if the men-o'-war were withdrawn. However, every one is glad of a rest, and we hope things will shake down into a permanent understanding.

We have a clean bill of health at Vailima now, but Fanny was still looking far from well when she came home. Then Belle got a cold; so we started separate meals in the old dining-room for Lou and any of the family who were quite above suspicion. It reminded me of days at Saranac and elsewhere, but I am glad to say we are all well again now, and returned to sociable family life.

Vailima, September 19, 1894.

THE very day my last letter was sent off the chiefs began work on the new road. We had a large bowl of *kava* made, and the boys carried it down to them, Louis and the rest of us going also to share it. Several speeches were made, which I need not attempt to describe; but the tone of affectionate sincerity, noticeable even to me who cannot understand Samoan, was very touching. They are making a splendid road, fully thirty feet wide; and it is hard work too, as a good many trees and a considerable stretch of lime hedge have to be cleared away by means of cutting and burning.

It has been a busy week; I have been out riding almost every day, and the moonlit evenings are so delightful, one is tempted to take

advantage of them. We have paid several visits —one of condolence to the widow of Le Mamea, who has just died; he was principal political interpreter, and will be very much missed, as there is no other Samoan who speaks and understands English so thoroughly. After a death it is the native custom to call and take a gift—for the matter of that, on every occasion of life in Samoa gifts are *de rigueur*; so Fanny took with her material for a black dress. How quaint it would seem to express one's sympathy like that at home! . . . Then we had also a great many visitors at Vailima, one day no less than six of the *Curaçoa* officers, in pairs, the last couple being the gunner and the carpenter, who wanted to study the Samoan woods. Louis took them a walk in the bush, and sent them off at length heavy laden with specimens. Another day we had 'a party' to lunch, and a supply of later arrivals at tea; the last of our visitors did not leave till 6, and as I had been hard at work since 7 A.M. preparing or entertaining, I felt righteously tired out and went to bed at 8.30. And I used to imagine that South Sea Islands were lonely spots where one never saw anybody, because there was nobody to see!

Yesterday, for instance, we got up an impromptu dance in honour of Belle's birthday. There were about thirty invited, all but *good* dancers being carefully eliminated; and the hall

made a capital ballroom, with the long dinner table pushed close to the end window, and used as a buffet for the cold supper. I think they all enjoyed themselves very much, and I am sure the audience did; for some of the road-making chiefs arrived to look on, and of course all our boys and their families and friends crowded round the wide doors and windows. Great was their admiration, but I think the climax was reached with the Highland schottische, which was danced with immense vigour and greeted with tremendous cheering and clapping of hands. After a while I retired to bed; but when before separating at twelve o'clock they all sang *Auld Lang Syne*, I could scarcely resist jumping up and running downstairs, just as I was, to join in it!

Here is a good story of Lafaële, while I remember it. He came the other day to Fanny and sat down at her feet as if he had something tragic to report; and presently, having thoroughly disturbed her by his air of gloom, he said, very lugubriously, 'Madam, what I do with *that dirty horse*?' Fanny had visions of some terrible disease attacking one of our steeds, but after considerable discussion found that it was his way of referring to some *manure* that she had told him to collect for her garden, about which he wanted further instructions!

September 30.

THIS week I have had neuralgia, which has prevented me from going to Malua, to join in the celebration of the jubilee of the Institution there. It must have been a very interesting sight; there were over three thousand present, and the bay was filled with the boats of those who had come by sea. All the different villages wore each a distinctive dress; no doubt it was much like the 'May-meeting' at Apia, or the opening of the school at Leulumoenga, only on a much larger scale, and I am sorry to have missed it.

At home our principal piece of news is that the chiefs finished the road on Thursday, and Lou is going to give them a feast, and formally open the road to traffic, some day this week. It is to be called *The Road of Loving Hearts*, which will be written in Samoan and English on a board, along with the names of all the chiefs who have worked upon it, to be set up on the opening day, at the end where it joins the public road across the island. Then all who pass may see that some Samoans *are* most truly grateful for any kindness shown to them. The name, by the way, is of Lou's choosing, and in Samoan is most musical. By the way—to make a leap with Lou for the only connecting-link—can you tell me when shops were first opened in Princes Street? In one of the books that Louis is busy

on just now he makes shops visible from the castle ramparts in 1813, and I *hae ma doots* about that. Perhaps you may be able to pick up some useful information on the subject.

October 4.

WE have a hanger-on called Elina, who lives in Apia, and does so many things for us that he is difficult to describe officially. He is 'the meat man,' and the washerman, and does our messages, and takes charge of the horse we lent to Dr. H——, and is a sort of general agent for Vailima in Apia! Well, this indispensable gentleman had a large wen on his back which seriously spoiled his appearance, and Fanny has for a long time been anxious that he should have it removed. Both doctors said there was no risk, but *he* declared he was certain he would die if it were touched! Fanny told him he was a disgrace to our *aiinga* (family), that people would blame us for not getting him made beautiful, when it was so easy; that it was a terrible thing to have a coward belonging to us, and so on, but hitherto without effect; she also tried bribery, and he was promised five dollars if he would have it done, while Louis and she would go down to his house and be with him when the operation took place. Nothing seemed of any avail till, quite suddenly, he gave in, and agreed to have it done yesterday at 5 A.M.;

FEAST TO THE CHIEFS ON THE OPENING OF "THE ROAD OF THE LOVING HEARTS"

rather an early hour, even for us, but natives have not much notion of time.

After a very early breakfast Louis and Fanny and the doctor (who is staying with us just now) started for Apia; and about eleven o'clock they returned with the good news that all had gone splendidly. Elina met them at the door and gave them *kava* before Fanny had even got off her horse; his house was got up in great style, with his best mats on the floor, and boxes arranged round the room. It was, of course, full of relatives and neighbours, quite forty in number, who had come, in Samoan fashion, to look on! Elina lay down on the mats, and poor Dr. H—— had to stoop over him as best he might; it must have been back-breaking work, and in such heat! Mr. C—— and Louis gave the chloroform; and when he began to go over, Elina repeated constantly in laborious English, *I belong Tusitala, I belong Tusitala*, and his first words when he came out were, *I'm not a coward now!* Fanny came home tired out with the heat and the excitement, but regards it as a triumph. . . .

October 7.

THE feast for the chiefs went off very well. All the chiefs, with their wives, were of course invited, and there were a good many hangers-on; besides whom we had the Chief-Justice, the President, the American Consul-

General, and the English and American Land Commissioners, as well as a few others, making quite sixty in all. We met on the verandah of the old house, and sat on mats; though there was a box, covered with *tapa*, in the centre, on which I and a few others took refuge when we really could not sit on the floor any longer. The feast was spread on the corresponding verandah of the new part of the house; it is not desirable to have native feasts inside the hall, as it takes so long to get rid of the smell of pig! Seumano, the chief of Apia, who was one of our guests, had brought with him three young ladies of his family, who were put in charge of the *kava*; and of course the serving of this opened the ceremony, being handed only to the chiefs and the gentlemen visitors; there was no time to include the ladies. Louis read aloud his speech of thanks to the chiefs, ending up with some friendly advice to make the best of things; and after Lloyd had given it in Samoan, speeches were made by Seumano, and by a 'talking-man' on behalf of the chiefs. Then we all trooped off to the feast, which consisted as usual of pigs, salt-beef, tinned salmon, puddings of coconut cream baked in *taro*-leaves, quantities of hard biscuit, and eighty pineapples. In the words of the old ditty—

'They did very well without fork or knife'—

and Lou declares he saw one chief put a newly

opened tin of salmon to his mouth, and *drink* it, juice and all, straight to the dregs! When it was over there was the usual barbaric scene of the distribution of the remains; and we could see people running off in all directions to store their bundles of provisions. They all seemed well content, which was the main point.

When the feast was over our white visitors left, but the chiefs asked leave to dance a *siva*, or native dance, in honour of Tusitala; it was a very *high-chief* dance, and only used on special occasions. It took place on the lawn, while we sat on the verandah steps; and high-chief or no, it was very queer and uncouth, but decidedly interesting. It was done half standing, half crouching, and imitated the management of a boat, pulling the ropes, setting sail, and so on. I have no doubt it has some historic basis, if we only knew. It was past six before it came to an end, and we were all glad to rest; though you will notice that the procession to view the board at the end of the road was omitted from the proceedings, partly to save time, and partly on account of the unusual heat.

And finally, do you know Charles Baxter is coming to pay us a visit? You can fancy how delighted Lou is, and how he looks forward to it; though it is a pity that Charles will arrive early in December, in the middle of the rainy season. I fear it will be impossible to take him on a *malanga*, and he may never see Samoa at

the height of her beauty. Nevertheless, he will be hailed with joy. . . .

Vailima, October 14, 1894.

THE mail-steamer from Sydney brought the news that the *Wallaroo* has been ordered to relieve the *Curaçoa*, and may be expected to arrive any day; so our friends are in a chronic state of leave-taking, and some of them are up every afternoon. Last Thursday Louis and a few others went on board the *Curaçoa* to make the presentation to Dr. H——; I told you how much he had done for us all lately, saved at least two lives, and worked exceedingly hard. Everybody wanted to find some way of expressing their gratitude, as a doctor in the navy is not allowed to accept fees; and it was a most happy thought, I think, and a capital way out of the difficulty, to send the sum that had been collected home to his wife. *He* was much pleased, and I am sure that *she* will be; and we were glad to be able to show that we appreciated all that he had done for us. I shall send you the paper with the speeches, etc., but must tell you the story of our own special copy. G—— had told us a tale of a presentation to a colonel of a silver jug. A sergeant was to make the presentation, and both he and the colonel had prepared elaborate speeches for the occasion; but when the moment arrived, all that the sergeant could manage to say was, 'Kornel,

that's the joog!'—to which he replied, '*Is* that the joog?' We had laughed over this with the doctor, and he had not forgotten it; so he went to the newspaper office, got them to print the four words for him, pasted a piece of paper over his real speech in the journal, and put in the prepared slip instead; so the paragraph read—

'Dr. H—— made the following brief and eloquent reply:

"*Is* that the joog?"'

After the presentation Louis dined on board, and rode up after ten o'clock at night. He takes his saddle off himself, and puts his horse in the paddock; what a change from when he first came here, when he would not have been allowed to lift anything so heavy as a saddle, let alone riding out so late at night. It is such little things as these that show how greatly his health has improved.

October 21.

NO word of the *Wallaroo* yet, and people are beginning to be uneasy. We still have almost daily visits from the *Curaçoans*, who like to make the most of the little time that may be left to them; but apart from that it has been a very quiet week indeed. The new *John Williams*, the Mission boat, is expected here at the end of the month, and Louis made our hair stand on end by proposing to go off in her to New Guinea; but we greeted the proposal

with such a howl of distress that he has given up the idea. It is a very bad place for fever, and this is the worst season for it—hence our anguish; not to speak of cannibalism, which I verily believe rather attracted Lou than otherwise!

Fanny has been busy superintending the levelling of the lawn. It has been a very slow business, as the soil, eighteen inches deep, has to be sifted clear of stones and roots, and the boys could only be spared occasionally from other more pressing labours. However, it is now almost finished. It stretches right across in front of the house, and over to the clump of trees, of which it encloses three; it is surrounded on two sides by a glorious hibiscus hedge, on the third by the house, and on the fourth by the path down to the gate. A tennis-net and court occupy one half, and at present badminton is played on the other; though later, when the turf is in good order, this will be replaced by croquet. The games are generally in full swing every afternoon, as soon as the sun gets behind Vaea Mountain, which just now is about half-past four. I have taken possession of the old dining-room as my sitting-room, because it is so much cooler than the wire-gauzed apartments in the new part of the house; and as I write now, I look out on the beautiful green lawn before the windows, and think with wonder on the marvellous change that has been brought about in little more than three

years, since I first saw the place. The young fruit-trees are beginning to bear, too; I saw one branch of an orange-tree, the other day, with eight splendid oranges upon it, and some trees of the small Chinese orange are laden with blossom and fruit. The cacaos near the house were also covered with fruit; but it had to be picked off while small, as it is too soon yet to allow them to bear. In a few short years, however, what a lovely place this will be, and what a delight to us, if we are all still here to enjoy it.

October 28.

I THINK the principal event of the past week was that on Tuesday G—— set off on his wanderings again. We knew that he wanted to go a trip round the islands in the *Archer*, which is the trading schooner that has replaced the one Louis and Fanny went in; but it was not certain when, or even whether, the boat would call here on her way. On Sunday the New Zealand steamer brought the news that G—— must go to Fiji in her, and join the *Archer* there; so off he went on Tuesday, and we are left lamenting. Fanny has dozens of schemes on hand that she declares can never be carried through without his assistance. He will be at least three months away, and will visit both the Gilberts and the Marshalls, as well as several other groups; and I am quite sure that he will thoroughly enjoy it.

Fanny's special work last week was to superintend the boys putting a culvert into the new road, to carry off the rain in the wet season; and her water-supply scheme is also now being actually carried out. Talolo found a good and suitable spring on Vaea Mountain, well above our house, and three men have been busy for several days digging a large reservoir, which will be lined with cement and covered over, to prevent people from bathing in it. Fanny spent nearly a whole day there directing and superintending; but I contented myself with going up to see the place, which is cool and pretty, and as the men have cut a path, it is now fairly easy for walking, instead of being impassable, as it was before. It is a great scheme, and when carried out will be an enormous boon and comfort.

The new Mission steamer, the *John Williams*, was expected to arrive on Thursday, and a lot of entertainments were being got up in her honour: a concert last night, a lecture on Africa by the captain of the vessel to-morrow evening, and the regular 'May-meeting,' when every one subscribes for the foreign missions, on Wednesday. I meant to be present at all these . . . but no *John Williams* has arrived! It seems to be the fashion just now for vessels not to turn up when due; there is no word of the *Wallaroo* yet either, and there is serious anxiety about her. Our friends of the *Curaçoa* come

and go and make the most of the short leave which is all that they can get, as they may have to start at very short notice any day. It is weary work hanging about like that.

November 6.

YESTERDAY brought the news that the belated *John Williams* would not be here till the 13th, which is very annoying after all the preparations had been made to receive her. A choir of one hundred voices was to sing hymns at the Sunday meeting; the Mission compound had been covered in with an awning of coconut leaves supported on posts for the 'May-meeting'; and all the missionaries had come into Apia from the other islands. Now we hear the boat can only stay three days, when she *does* come, so the Sunday meeting cannot be held at all; and I am truly sorry for Mr. C——, who has had so much trouble for nothing.

Yesterday we had a visit from about fifteen of the sailors of the *Curaçoa*; they had a holiday on shore and rode up, saying they wanted to see 'the home of the great novelist' before they left Samoa. I think they thoroughly enjoyed their visit; and when they went away they gave three famous British cheers for Mr. and Mrs. Stevenson and the rest of the family. But there is still no word of the *Wallaroo*, and as the latest news from Sydney makes it clear that she should have been here some time ago, we greatly fear there

has been an accident. And that is odd; I began this letter with the expected arrival of the *Wallaroo*, and I close it with the *Wallaroo*—expected still.

Vailima, November 11, 1894.

BOTH the long-expected vessels arrived yesterday, the *John Williams* about 10 A.M., and close behind her H.M.S. *Wallaroo*. You may fancy the joy of all on board the *Curaçoa*; they have waited two months in daily expectation, and though they declare they are sorry to leave Samoa, yet the delight of 'going home' is stronger than all else. Well, their gain is our loss, and I doubt whether we shall ever so take 'a whole shipful' to our hearts again. The 'family' went down to service and lunch on board the *Curaçoa* on Sunday, in order to say good-bye; and this morning at 8.30 I went to the beach (I had slept in Apia) to see her departure. There was much manning of yards and saluting on the *Buzzard* and the *Wallaroo*; all gave three cheers, and the bands played 'Home, Sweet Home' as the *Curaçoa* passed out through the reef on her way to England. Well, every one was sorry to see the last of her.

On Sunday evening I rode down to the Mission, as I wanted to attend the *John Williams* meeting. The house was full of missionaries from all the different stations: from Falealili, from Savaii, from Leulumoenga, and

from Malua. Captain H—— of the new *John Williams* was there also; he is a very pleasant and interesting man, and told me that he had been a long time in Africa, and had surveyed the whole of Lake Tanganyika. He had visited our Blantyre Mission, and spoke most highly of it; he said 'it was delightful to see a Mission made to suit the circumstances of the place, instead of a place forced into suiting the preconceived plans of the Mission,' and he added, 'I assure you, the gardener is almost the most important person there!' I went on board the *John Williams*, and found her most comfortably arranged; indeed, I should quite enjoy a cruise in her; and on Monday evening I attended a very good concert got up in honour of her arrival, quite the best I have heard in Samoa. Unfortunately, the weather was wet, which kept away some who live at a distance; and one recitation was quite spoilt by the noise of a very heavy shower of rain upon the iron roof.

On Tuesday morning the 'May-meeting' was held, so I stayed on in Apia to attend it; but the weather spoilt it a good deal, at least as a festival. When I first saw it everything looked beautiful under a bright sun, and we were thankful for any sort of shade; but this time it had to be held under a shelter erected in the Mission compound, and the space was rather limited. I told you before that on this occasion the Samoans —eighteen or nineteen villages, I think—bring

in their annual contributions to the Missions; the women of each village, dressed alike, walked in procession round the shelter before taking their seats. I was very sorry the surroundings were not better, for the dresses were unusually fine, thoroughly Samoan, with much really beautiful *tapa* and the characteristic head-dresses of coco-fibre. The flowers, too, were splendid, and it is the only occasion on which one sees so effective a gathering nowadays. But even as it was, the meeting did not go off without mishap. Just as the preliminaries were finished, and Captain H—— began his speech, down came a regular *pour* of rain like a huge shower-bath, and as the roof was by no means fit to stand such a deluge, we had to take to flight and seek for 'cover' as fast as we could. Later on the meeting was finished in the public hall, but as that held a bare half of the people, it could not be called a great success. It was truly disappointing.

In the afternoon I rode home quite tired out by my three days' gaiety (!) in Apia. Fortunately we had agreed to hold Lou's birthday on Wednesday, the 14th, so I had a few hours' rest before me; but now I must tell you of the feast, and you will not wonder if I add that I still feel tired!

I must tell you that Fanny and I had ridden over last week to the Catholic Mission on Vaea Mountain to arrange for the food required for

the party; it was the first time I had been there, and I found it a beautiful place, with such large and lovely outlooks over the harbour and the sea. It is quite a settlement too, with a chapel and several houses built in stone, besides the native quarters, and such exquisitely tended gardens. . . . Well, that was a necessary preliminary. The celebration of the day itself began before 7 A.M., when Elina, 'who belongs to Tusitala,' sent up four men to help in making the native ovens, and to look after the cooking. The first procession came from Tanugamanono, and was headed by Pola (Belle's adopted son); he was covered with beautiful garlands, and walked with a very grand air, for he considers himself a most important person as 'the son of Teuila.' The processions went on arriving from far and near till 3 P.M., and a great many gifts were brought and presented; they were all laid out in the old dining-room, and made quite a grand display. There were two very *old* mats, which are extremely valuable, and some fine *kava* bowls, and a great many ordinary mats and pieces of *tapa*, fans, rings (one with 'Tusitala' on it in silver), and quantities of wreaths and bouquets and loose flowers. We had had a shelter arranged on the lawn, as it was not very convenient to have the feast on the verandah; the posts that supported it were wreathed with greenery, and the roof consisted of coconut and banana leaves plaited together, and looked very

pretty. The meal itself was arranged on banana leaves down the centre, and there was plenty of room to sit round; it was strictly Samoan in character—no knives and forks were allowed, and the only concession made to Papalangi prejudices was that salt was handed round upon a small leaf. Now for a list of the supplies, as nearly as I can manage it; but though I am pretty certain of the *main* items, I am almost sure I have overlooked a good many of the 'sundries'—

1 heifer roasted whole in a native oven;
20 pigs roasted whole in a native oven;
50 chickens;
17 pigeons;
430 *taro* roots;
12 large yams;
80 arrowroot puddings;
50 *palusamis*;
804 pineapples; and
20 bunches of bananas.

Some of the pigs, chickens, and *taro* were brought as gifts, but the pineapples were all grown on Vailima ground, and we were very proud of them. We had also two sets of dancers as an entertainment; first, a set of Tongans, eight men and ten little boys, who had been beautifully trained, and went through the most intricate evolutions in perfect time to the beating of a . . . tin box! They carried bunches of reeds that they used to represent swords or

guns, according to circumstances; and tied round their ankles they wore strings of nut-shells, that made a peculiar and warlike rattle whenever they moved. Their dresses also were very fine, of stiff *tapa* with many wreaths and girdles of all kinds, and head-dresses of prepared coconut pith, which looks like feathers: they were really a pretty sight. This part of the entertainment took place in our large hall before the feast, to pass the time during a very heavy shower of rain; luckily it did not last long, and the sun dried everything in a few minutes, so we managed the 'banquet' without any drawbacks. When it was finished we had Samoan dancing on the lawn, during which, according to the native custom, original verses were sung in honour of Tusitala and all his family; there was a game of cricket, and a good deal of the 'pantomime' acting that all the Samoans love. Elina was one of the performers, and we were greatly amused to find that one scene described the cutting-off of his wen! He tied a pineapple round his neck to represent the growth, and he went through a most expressive pantomime to show his terror before the operation, and his joy when it was over!

There were no speeches during the feast, but when a few of us were together in the hall just before the break-up, the Consul-General proposed Tusitala's health in a very beautiful way. I only wish I had a copy of the words to send

you. Dear Lou, what cause for thankfulness it is that he has been spared to see his forty-fourth birthday in so much health and comfort.

November 25.

WE have had a very quiet week, the only event being the sad and sudden death of the young wife of our consul here. She had a severe attack of fever, and took an abrupt turn for the worse; she had always been so strong and well that we fear she did not take the constant precautions necessary in this climate. It is especially sad, as they were to have gone home in January next, and what a painful home-going it will be now! She will be greatly missed by every one. . . .

I do not think that anything particular has been going on here. Fanny's waterworks are being much delayed by the wet weather; she spends hours up there superintending the men when they are at work, and one day when I went with her I found it so cold as to make me fancy myself back in Scotland—which was not pleasant when I was only dressed for the tropics. Nevertheless we have begun to take breakfast on the back verandah, and it is very pleasant; to my surprise we do not feel chilled or uncomfortable even when it is raining heavily. The only nuisance is the flies, and the only way to deal with *them* is to have them constantly switched off by one of the boys. This morn-

ing it was very wet, and I was much amused to watch the boys bringing cakes and other dishes from the kitchen sheltered from the rain by a . . . fan! and my boy, Kapélé, having been sent to fetch limes, reappeared presently, his hands full of the fruit, and himself *running* with water as if he had just stepped out of a shower-bath. He looked quite undisturbed and happy.

December 2.

LAST Thursday was Thanksgiving Day, and Fanny invited all our American friends to dinner. Everything was as correct and American as possible; and I think that when I give you the *menu*, you will allow that it was not bad for a tropical island. We had soup, fish-ball, roast-turkey with cranberry sauce (which will surprise you; but Fanny found a most successful substitute in a Samoan berry), roast-mutton and vegetables, sweet potato pudding (which is also one of the 'correct' dishes), and American apples, which had just arrived by the mail-steamer. Last, but not least, I must not forget what is a great treat to us here, we had *ice*. Louis gave a little thanksgiving prayer as grace; and after dinner, when the Consul-General had proposed the health of the family in a very good speech, Louis returned thanks, very beautifully as it seemed to me, and very touchingly, as was apparent by the effect it had on all who listened. He mentioned 'some of

the many things' he had to be thankful for, and one was that he had his mother 'still and always' with him; and he said, too, that he had reason to be grateful to America for much that was brightest in his life. After that the next toast was naturally 'The women of America,' and we all did it hearty justice. . . .

There is still much illness and fever at Apia, and the English consul and his little girl have both been moved to the Mission-house to be nursed and taken care of. How wonderfully free of such troubles we have been at Vailima, and how thankful we ought indeed to be for it!

Vailima, December 4.

HOW am I to tell you the terrible news that my beloved son was suddenly called home last evening. At six o'clock he was well, hungry for dinner, and helping Fanny to make a Mayonnaise sauce; when suddenly he put both hands to his head and said, 'Oh, what a pain!' and then added, 'Do I look strange?' Fanny said no, not wishing to alarm him, and helped him into the hall, where she put him into the nearest easy-chair. She called for us to come, and I was there in a minute; but he was unconscious before I reached his side, and remained so for two hours, till at ten minutes past 8 P.M. all was over.

Lloyd went for help at once, and got two doctors wonderfully quickly—one from the *Wal-*

LYING IN STATE, 4TH DEC., 1894

laroo and the other, Dr. F——, from Apia; but we had already done all that was possible, and they could suggest nothing more. Before the end came we brought a bed into the hall, and he was lifted on to it. When all was over his boys gathered about him, and the chiefs from Tanugamanono arrived with fine mats which they laid over the bed; it was very touching when they came in bowing, and saying 'Talofa, Tusitala'; and then, after kissing him and sitting a while in silence, they bowed again, and saying 'Tofa, Tusitala,' went out. After that our Roman Catholic boys asked if they might 'make a church,' and they chanted prayers and hymns for a long time, very sweetly. . . . We had sent for Mr. C——, who stayed with us till all was over, and made the necessary arrangements for us; Louis wished to be buried on the top of Vaea Mountain, and before six this morning forty men arrived with axes to cut a path up and dig the grave. Some of Mataafa's chiefs came this morning; one wept bitterly, saying, 'Mataafa is gone, and Tusitala is gone, and we have none left.' . . .

They have just gone up the mountain now. The letters must be posted to-night, and I scarcely know what I am writing. None of us has realised yet what has happened, and we shall only feel it all the more as days go by. . . . I feel desolate indeed, and don't know what I shall do. . . .

Vailima, December 9, 1894.

LIFE seems to have stood still with us since Tuesday, and none of us can do anything but think over our loss, which only grows greater as we begin dimly to realise it. No one, at least, was ever more universally mourned than my beloved son. . . . The ascent to the top of Vaea Mountain was a very difficult matter, and many of the men found it more than they could manage. The coffin left half an hour before the invited guests, as the labour of climbing with it was so great; but there were many relays of loving Samoan hands ready to carry their dear Tusitala to his last home amongst them, and they took the utmost pains to bear him shoulder high, and as steadily and reverently as possible. Behind them came the few near and good friends that we had invited to be present; and when they reached the top of the mountain they found the coffin laid beside the grave, and covered with the flag that used to fly over us in those happy days upon the *Casco*.[1] . . .

As soon as it was lowered into its place, and the wreaths and crosses thrown in till it was hidden from sight, our house-boys seized the spades from the 'outside' boys who had dug the grave; no hands but theirs, who had been specially 'Tusitala's family,' should fill it in, and do the last service for him that was left to them.

[1] *From Saranac to the Marquesas.* Methuen and Co.

Mr. C—— read portions of the Church of England burial-service, and also a prayer written by Louis himself, which he had read at family worship only the night before his death; and Mr. N—— gave an address in Samoan, which made all who understood it weep; and prayed also in the same language, that Louis loved so well. . . . When they returned to the house I talked for a while to Mr. N——, and he told me that when he was here more than a year ago Louis told him of his great desire to be buried on the top of Vaea, and showed him where his new study was to be built, with a window from which he could see the place. I wonder if it suggested to him the upliftedness of death.

It was a terribly tiring day, but perhaps it was good for us that we had no time to ourselves. Many Samoan ladies came to bring us flowers and show their sympathy, and they sat on the verandah for several hours. As soon as the boys returned we gave them tea, but we were thankful when it was all over. You see we had had no food ourselves. No one had had time or inclination for eating from midday on Monday, our usual lunch, till Tuesday morning; and even then we could scarcely take enough to help us through with all that had to be done. I am thankful to know that we got through it somehow. And I am glad, too, to feel how cheerful and happy he was to the very last; he bore the

signs of it still about him, and looked so sweet and peaceful, with his face so full of life, and far less thin, it seemed to me, than I had ever seen it.

I must tell you a very strange thing that occurred just before his death. For a day or two Fanny had been telling us that she knew—that she *felt*—something dreadful was going to happen to some one we cared for; as she put it, to one of our friends. On Monday she was very low about it, and upset, and dear Lou tried hard to cheer her. He read aloud to her the chapter of his book that he had just finished, played a game or two of Patience to induce her to look on, and I fancy it was as much for her sake as his own that the Mayonnaise sauce was begun upon. And, strangely enough, both of them had agreed that it could not be to either of *them* that the dreadful thing was to happen! Thus far, and no further, can our intuitions, our second sight, go. . . .

I have had so many letters from our friends here, and especially from the missionaries; Mr. C——, indeed, has been like a son to me during these sad days. And we are not alone in our grief. Sosimo, Lou's special boy, is quite inconsolable; he keeps Tusitala's room in exquisite order, and when Fanny and I were there this morning, we were touched to find two glasses filled with beautiful fresh white flowers on the table beside his bed. And the Apia people were deeply disappointed when they found that the

funeral was not to be in the little cemetery there; they say that every man, woman, and child in the place would have attended it. But he seems nearer to us on Vaea. Did I tell you that we had a tree cut down on the mountain, so that now we can see his last resting-place quite distinctly from the verandah; Fanny would like to have a Scottish cairn erected on the spot, and I am sure our Samoans would be eager to take their share in it.

Then on Monday we had a visit from Elina. He had been away at Savaii, and had only returned that morning; his wife met him and told him of our loss before he was out of his boat, and he never went home, but came straight up to Vailima, with a pig that he had brought from Savaii as a Christmas present for his beloved Tusitala. . . . And there was another very touching scene, when the Tongans who were here on Lou's birthday came to show their respect in the manner that is customary in Tonga on the death of a chief. We were warned of their approach by hearing sad and solemn singing, and presently they came—more than twenty of them—walking in three divisions, each carrying a pole some twelve feet long, from which hung long streamers made of the bark of a tree dyed in different colours, pink and white and yellow prevailing. Each man and boy also carried a bouquet of flowers made out of the same dyed bark, and very curious; and they

wore black *lava-lavas* and black bands upon their arms. When they came near the house they took a few steps to one side, then stood quite still with their heads bent down upon their breasts, and their leader said, 'We mourn for Tusitala'; then a few steps to the other side, and again the bent heads, and—'We mourn for Tusitala.' This was repeated several times; and then the banners were brought to the verandah and laid at our feet, and we shook hands with them all and sat down, the leader beside us, and the rest at a little distance. The chief made a very nice speech, saying that the Samoans did not love them because they were 'out-Islanders,' and Tusitala had been their only friend; when they heard of his death the whole village was sad and silent as if a great Tongan chief had died. Then they sang a very beautiful hymn, the refrain of which was 'He rests in heaven'; and one of them, who wore a black coat and may have been a native minister, made a very touching prayer. After this *kava* was served, and we all partook of it with them; and before they went away they sang to us again. All the banners are to be laid upon the grave, and they have arranged to return next week and carry them up, after our own boys have made the road a little more passable. We gave them a pig when they left, but we were distressed to have had nothing but *kava* served here, when we found that they had walked *eleven miles* to come to us;

next week we must see that they have good food when they return from the grave. These Tongans are poor people, exiles who fled from Tonga to avoid the harsh government of Mr. ——, who, I regret to say, is a missionary.

December 16.

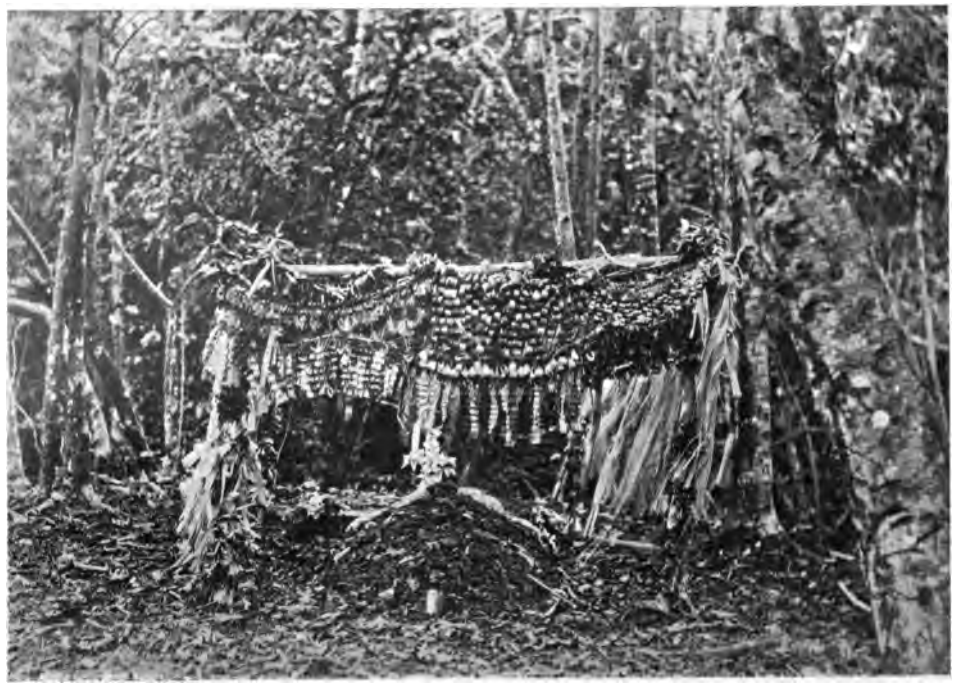
ANOTHER Sunday without my child; his leaving us was so swift and sudden, that I seem only now to begin to realise that I shall see him on earth no more. . . . Yesterday we had another sad scene to go through, the paying-off of the outside boys; their last work had been to make a better road to the top of the mountain, and it was finished yesterday. In the afternoon we all assembled in the hall, the first time that it had been used since the funeral; and Lloyd made a speech, explaining how sorry we were that we could not keep them any longer now that Tusitala had left us, and thanking them for all their loving services. One of them replied, saying how happy they had been here, that they had always been made to feel themselves like members of the family, had been well fed and taken care of when they were sick, and that they were very sorry to go away and leave us. Then they sang a couple of songs of farewell to Tusitala that two of them had composed, and we drank *kava* together and shook hands with them all. Some of them kissed our hands, as they said, *Tofa, soifua*, 'Farewell, may you live.' . . .

Of the outside boys we have only kept our old friend Lafaële, who takes care of the cows and pigs, Leuello, Fanny's boy, who works in the garden, and a Tongan who has only one eye, and is delicate as well. Some time ago Lloyd suggested to Louis that as he was of little use, he had better be sent away; but Louis replied that he had no home to go to, and there was every chance of his becoming altogether blind, and that as long as *he* was at Vailima, the Tongan should have a home there too. Now we feel that he is a precious legacy to us, and the poor boy's look of relief when he found that he was to be allowed to stay on was good to see. But it was nice to find that Talolo had told this boy Tuli that if he had to go, he should have a home in his, Talolo's, family.

Next Saturday four of the horses are to be sold, two of the riding-horses and the two larger 'carters,' that we need no longer, as the road is so rapidly being finished now, that we shall be able to get our stores brought up by wagon.

December 23.

THE Tongans returned on Wednesday, bringing some poles with streamers, and a dozen chickens and some yams as gifts. The same formalities were gone through as on the last occasion, but there were more of them present, between thirty and forty this time, and some of them were women. They then started to carry their poles



TONGAN DECORATIONS ON THE GRAVE OF R.L.S.

to the top of Vaea, and we all followed, save Fanny, who is still far from well. Mr. A——, the photographer, went with us, to take some photos of the grave. The boys have made a wonderfully good zigzag path, and I got up with much less fatigue than I expected. It is exactly seven hundred feet above Vailima; I took up my aneroid to make sure. It is a very lovely resting-place, a small flat plateau on the top of a spur of Vaea; the ground slopes away from it almost precipitously on all sides, and you look down into two narrow valleys close beneath, and away to high mountains and the beautiful blue Pacific ocean beyond. At one spot there is a view straight down to Vailima, which lies like a toy village far below.

The dear grave seemed to be just a heap of stones, with a small cross to mark the head. The Tongans sang some hymns, very sweetly, while Mr. A—— photographed it as it was; then they arranged their gifts over it according to the Tongan fashion. They stuck four cleft sticks or posts into the ground at the four corners, and fastened the poles they had carried up into the clefts about eight feet from the ground; then all the streamers were attached to the poles, the posts were wreathed with greenery and flowers, a few fresh blossoms were fastened in at the top of the streamers, and all the bark bouquets were scattered on the grave. It had a very strange and quaint effect, rather like the hangings of an

old-fashioned four-poster bed; I think my dear Lou would have liked it, he was always so interested in these curious national ceremonies. When all was finished, Mr. A—— photographed the grave, first alone, and then with the Tongans grouped on one side, and our Vailima and Tanugamonono friends on the other. Some of these views I hope to send you home, and this description will make them clear to you.

New Year's Day, 1895.

THE mail came in, bringing the last letters that we shall get from you, written before you hear of our loss; their very cheerfulness made us all the sadder. I could not but think of the last mail that came in while we were eating our Thanksgiving dinner, and how we were all longing to get to our letters. Mr. Gosse had sent Louis his 'Poem to Tusitala,' and Lou read it to us next day, with so much pleasure in it. He also had a delightful letter from J. M. Barrie, who could not leave his mother then as she was so frail, but 'still hoped to come to Samoa'; and now, alas! it is *too late*.

I cannot help quoting a few words from a letter that came to 'the grieving family at Vailima'—

'My love! I have received this letter written for me, and it has added increasingly to my grief. I am beside myself at this time, and hardly know what I am doing, because there has come to me the heavy news of the farewell of the friend,

dearly beloved; he was indeed very dear to me; my heart is faint, and my whole body weak, I am overcome with grief. Sorrow, exceeding, has come to me, because of the departure of Tusitala. . . . Alas! for the lady-mother, filled with grief in the remembrance of the chief who was attended by her when little, and who became the substitute for his father! . . . I who write this am grieved with you. . . . I will go yet that we may grieve together. . . .'

The letters are to be sent down early, so I have no time to write more. Little Austin starts this afternoon or to-morrow morning for New Zealand, where he is to go to school; what a small household we shall be henceforth, and what a sad one, longing always for

'The touch of a vanished hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still.'

Vailima, January 6, 1895.

I HAD to finish my last letter hurriedly, as it was New Year's Day, and the boys went off early to Apia for a holiday. . . .

You have no idea how many changes there seem to be about us in the last sad weeks. The Land Commission has finished its work, and Mr. H—— will leave for home in three weeks; some other friends left last Friday; and poor Austin, who started for Auckland on Thursday, had such a melancholy send-off. He went down first on Wednesday, with his mother, in a pour

of rain; then heard that the boat would not sail till next day, because the heavy swell prevented the cargo from being discharged; so home they came again, late at night, and wet through. We were sorry he had not stayed at the hotel for the night. However, there he was, and before six next morning—another pouring wet day—he and his mother set off once more to *walk* down to Apia. Meanwhile the captain had got nervous about the weather, because the man-o'-war had gone outside the reef, and wanted to be off too; he had hurriedly whistled-up the passengers, and but for a friend forcibly detaining the boat till Austin appeared, he would have been left behind. As it was, he was bundled in like a bale of goods. Poor boy, what a different start to the first time, when we were all there to see him off!

Even the weather is miserable, the most decided wet season I have yet seen in Samoa, more like the storm that I had a peep at for two nights on my flying visit here in March '91. The rain began on Tuesday and went on without intermission for four days; and what rain! the noise is deafening—a roar of water. Last night it began again, and now, though fair, it is so dark and gloomy that it is like a home November sky.

January 13.

WE have got many letters and newspapers from New Zealand and Australia, and I am grieved to find that you did not receive

the telegrams we sent you till after the news was published in the papers. I do hope you were not long kept in suspense; the wire was to be despatched immediately on arrival at San Francisco, but they warned us that press despatches would be sent through first.

I don't think I told you of a remark made by the doctor of the *Wallaroo* that haunts me constantly. We were watching round dear Lou, Fanny and I were rubbing his arms with brandy, and his shirt-sleeves were pushed up, and showed their thinness; some one made a remark about his writing, and Dr. A—— said, 'How can anybody write books with arms like these?'

I turned round indignantly and burst out with, 'He has written *all* his books with arms like these!'

I don't think I was ever before so terribly impressed with the greatness of the struggle that my beloved child had made against his bad health. He has written at the rate of a volume a year for the last twenty years, in spite of weakness which most people would have looked on as an excuse for confirmed invalidism; and he has lived, too, and loved his life in spite of it all. Do you remember how years ago, when some one was comforting him by saying that the Balfours always got stronger as they grew older, he replied, 'Yes; but just as I begin to outgrow the Balfour delicacy, the Nemesis of the short-lived Stevensons will come in and finish me off!'

That has been at the back of my mind all these years, and you see it has come true. I wonder if it would have been better to let him start in the *John Williams*, as he proposed, and get a complete rest. But there is no use in asking oneself such questions; it seemed so unwise then, and who could foresee what was to happen?

Lafaële told us that when he was on his way to milk the cows a very short time before Louis was struck down, he saw him throw open the Venetian shutters of his window, and gaze up at the top of Vaea Mountain; when he noticed Lafaële he waved his hand, and called *talofa* to him quite cheerily. . . .

The heather has arrived safely, and we covered an anchor-shape with it, and yesterday I took it up Vaea. The ladies of the Papauta school had wished to take up a wreath, and another friend had sent one of white immortelles; so yesterday I climbed the mountain once more, with Sosimo and Mitaele to help us, and we laid our wreaths on the dear resting-place, and planted some frangipani. It was looking very lovely, and all the colour has been washed out of the Tongan decorations, but that was little loss. There was a wonderful silence and peace up there, under a sky grey enough for once to recall the home he loved so well.

I have little heart to write of other things. Four of our boys are ill with a prevailing epidemic that some say is influenza, and others call

dengue fever; I don't know which is right, but it seems to prostrate the victim thoroughly, and to leave great weakness after. I hope we shall have no more of it. I must not forget, by the bye, to tell you a nice thing about Elina—the man who had the wen removed. The Samoans despise any kind of deformity very greatly, so he was looked down upon on account of the growth; but since it was removed, he has paid a visit to his family in Savaii, where he was received with open arms, acclaimed as a *manaia*, or beau, and given a 'chief' name and a 'chief' head-dress. He came back, as you can understand, a very big and happy person. Well, he was recently told that henceforth we were going to wash most of the clothes at home, and only give him the finer things; and this was his reply—

'When Tusitala first came I was a poor despised man, feeding on grass (wild *taro*, etc., from the bush), and I hungered and thirsted for Tusitala's money; now I am rich and beautiful, and a chief, and if you will give me all the clothes I will gladly wash them for nothing!'

Don't you think it was nice of the poor fellow?

I am not sure of my own plans yet. At first I intended to stay on here till the end of the year, but I begin to think I ought to go home sooner. I must of course be here to see Charles Baxter, but it is just possible that I may leave Samoa on my way home to you about the end of March. I cannot settle yet, and I feel very

confused. Just now I am changing rooms, so as to give up mine to Charles Baxter; he will feel the mosquitoes less behind the wire gauze, and they are bad at this season. Kapélé is hard at work under my superintendence; the matting is all down now, and to-day the new chintz covers are being put on, and the room is at last all finished, *too late*. How sad it all is.

Vailima, February 3, 1895.

CHARLES BAXTER is here.

He had a very stormy passage all the way from Sydney, and passed through a severe hurricane which obliged them to 'lie-to' for eleven hours. The boat should have arrived on Wednesday, and Lloyd went to Apia to meet it; but the day passed, and Thursday came, and still there was no steamer. We were on the watch constantly, till at 6 P.M. the flag went up that showed she was at last in sight. Even then, however, we were afraid to expect too much; it was a pouring wet night, and when by ten o'clock no one had arrived, we made sure they had stayed in Apia and would not come up till morning. We all went to bed: and lo, just as I was falling asleep about eleven, I heard voices, rushed into my dressing-gown, ran to the door and called out, 'Is that you, Charles?' And there he was, at Vailima at last; but alas! only to find the dead body of Vailima, the life and soul having departed.

We had a long talk before we went to bed for the second time, and indeed have been talking more or less ever since. Friday was a lovely day, so his first impression of Vailima (by daylight) has been a pleasant one. He acknowledges it is beautiful, and said to me, '*Now* I don't wonder that you came back here.' The woods at present are at their very best, splendidly green after the rain; and the *fuafua* trees are in full blossom, a lovely shade of pink in masses, that at a distance might be pink hawthorn. I have never seen such heavy bloom as this year, I suppose the very wet season suits them.

Charles brought us all the two first volumes of our sets of the 'Edinburgh Edition.' My set has *To my Mother* on a separate page at the beginning of each volume, and Fanny, Belle, and Lloyd have all suitable inscriptions inserted in the same way. They are handsome books, beautifully turned out in every respect; and my dear Lou's copy is lovely, printed on Japanese paper and bound in crimson morocco. It is heart-breaking to think that if he had lived just two little months longer, he would have seen it; and he would have been so much pleased. I can see him fingering it as he used to finger *An Inland Voyage* when it was first published. And how happy he would have been in Charles's presence here.

The more I think about your time of anxiety and suspense, the more I am grieved about it,

and yet I do not think we were much to blame. We were advised not to trust the messages to the Sydney and Auckland steamers, which were very irregular and undependable just then; their own agent could not tell us anything definite about them, and, moreover, they do not usually go direct, but round by Tonga and Fiji and other islands. I can't help thinking that on this occasion they changed their course, and *did* go direct, that they might have the credit of being first to tell the sad news.

February 10.

A PERFECT day, everything dazzlingly beautiful; how I long for the dear master to be here to enjoy it. Last week was very wet, so that Charles Baxter was kept mostly to the house, which was vexing. He is charmed with the little he has yet seen of the place and the people, but he finds the mosquitoes a terrible drawback; he suffers severely from them, much more than any of us have ever done, and has been obliged to give up sitting on the verandah. Even in his bedroom, which the wire gauze is supposed to render insect-proof, he cannot sleep without mosquito-nets. They are all going off on a *malanga* very soon to show Charles something of the beauties of Samoa. I shall stay at home and pack; for if I leave, as I have now decided to do, by the March boat, I must begin to get things together.

THE TOMB OF TUSITALA

I had a small adventure yesterday. I was on my way to visit the school at Papauta, and had reached the place where our path joins the road, when I found that the joining was marked by a little ditch—I suppose to carry off the water. My horse, Vai Vai, positively refused even to look at the obstacle. I tried persuasion, both by voice and whip, without avail, so I got off and tried to lead her, but found she could pull *me* much more easily than I could pull *her*. Consequently I mounted again (much pleased with myself for getting up and down without any help), and rode back for assistance. I found that Ludo, Fanny's boy, was just going to ride to Apia, so I told him to be quick and go with me. He appeared at once with nothing on but a *lava-lava*, and carrying his saddle and bridle and various articles of clothing in his arms; in a trice he had got his horse ready, mounted, and we set off, while he put on the rest of his garments for all the world like a circus-rider. The last thing he did was to take something out of a little leather bag that was strapped round his waist; I wondered what in the world it could be, and seeing my interest, he held it out with a proud grin to show me that it was his . . . false tooth! Some time ago he had had a front tooth taken out on account of the great pain it was setting up, and he was in such distress at having his beauty spoiled that Fanny gave him this one to replace it, to his immense pride and joy. The

putting-in of that tooth was therefore the coping-stone of his toilet.

February 17.

THEY started on their *malanga* on Wednesday. Tuesday was a busy day of preparation, and Charles Baxter came to me quite anxiously, saying, 'I am certain not one of us can get into the boat; they are taking enough furniture for a house, and enough provisions to last a twelvemonth!' The weather, since they started, has been extraordinarily fine for the season, so I trust the trip will be a success. Their first visit was to be to Tamasese. Lloyd wrote to announce their coming, and signed himself *your true friend*; he got back a delighted reply, which wound up with *your darling friend*! Tamasese, however, warned Lloyd that he must on no account bring any of Malietoa's people with him, or they might have their heads cut off before he, Tamasese, had time to interfere; which is not a very pleasant picture of the country they are going through. Lloyd decided, under the circumstances, to engage the Tongans as boatmen, as they are neutrals; and they have taken besides only our two young boys, Mitaele and Kapélé, who, being still untattooed, are looked upon as children, and are therefore safe anywhere. It was my dear Louis who had planned out this trip for Charles, and he wished Fanny to go too, as she has never yet been on a

malanga; so we all insisted that she must go and carry out his wishes. I have no doubt it is very trying for her, but I hope it will do her good in the end.

February 24.

WE expected the *malanga* party home on Wednesday evening, but they did not arrive; and you may imagine how distressed I was when Mitaele appeared on Thursday morning to tell me that they were close behind him, but that Lloyd was very ill. He has got *dengue* fever, just when we thought we were all going to escape it. Fortunately the road is now so far advanced that they were able to drive up all the way, and poor Lloyd was half carried into the house and put straight to bed. He has been alarmingly ill ever since, and has needed constant attendance and nursing; so terribly weak and faint that we were very anxious about him. The doctor says he is going on well, but that he will need great care, and that it will be a long time before he gets his strength back. I believe, by the way, that the *malanga* was a great success; but Lloyd's illness has given us little time to talk about anything else.

There has been one other matter, however, that has demanded some attention. Reports have of late been industriously circulated, to the effect that Louis had been selling rifles to the rebels. For some time we only laughed at them,

but at last we found that a half-caste, to whom we had been specially kind, had taken the story to the *Times* office, and declared that he could prove it. This was too much, and we felt that it was high time to take some steps; so we sent an emphatic denial to both the papers, and Mr. —— was apprehended on Saturday night and lodged in the prison. We are told that he was heard crying out for some one to come and stand bail for him, but no one paid the least attention; which I hope may teach him to be a little more careful in his inventions for the future.

February 28.

LLOYD is improving, though we are warned that in *dengue* fever relapses are common and dangerous, and great care must be taken well into convalescence. It is certainly a horrid complaint.

At last we have heard from G——, who left us, as it seems to me, ages ago, on a trip round the islands. How often and anxiously we have wondered of late where he was. He writes now from the Marshall Islands on the 24th of January, and no word of the sadness that had been flashing round the world for some six weeks had then reached him. Truly, the South Seas are the world's backwaters. . . . He had a chance to go on to Manila and China that was too good to lose, so he will not be back here till the

middle of May, by which time I expect to be arriving in London. I am very sorry to miss him, and we had hoped he would be here along with Charles Baxter, to talk over many matters, posthumous publications, the life, and so on. In the meantime I fancy that Louis's letters to Sidney Colvin, which have been regular and full, will be brought out with as little delay as possible.

And now I must stop, for the mail goes out to-day. For the third time within two years I am starting shortly on a journey half-round the world, and in less than three months I hope to be with you; if I go straight home, I am not sure whether any letters after this will reach you more than a few days earlier than I myself. In any case, this is the last time I shall write to you from Samoa. *The last time.* . . . I will say no more. I cannot realise yet how much I must leave behind me on Vaea, nor how much has come to an end for me here . . . on earth.

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1891-1895

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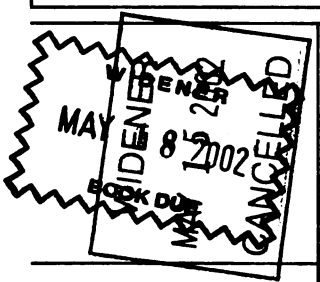

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